

Rating:

- Teen And Up Audiences

**Archive Warning:**

- **Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings**

Category:

- Gen

Fandoms:

- Video Blogging RPF
- Minecraft (Video Game)

Relationships:

- Clay | Dream & GeorgeNotFound & Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF)
- Clay | Dream & Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF)
- Clay | Dream & GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF)
- Clay | Dream (Video Blogging RPF) & Everyone
- Clay | Dream & TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF)

Characters:

- Clay | Dream (Video Blogging RPF)
- Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF)
- GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF)
- Darryl Noveschosch
- Clay | Dream's Sister Drista (Video Blogging RPF)
- Alexis | Quackity
- Karl Jacobs
- TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF)
- Wilbur Soot
- Dream SMP Ensemble

Additional Tags:

- Clay | Dream-centric (Video Blogging RPF)
- Angst
- Clay | Dream Angst (Video Blogging RPF)
- Sick Clay | Dream (Video Blogging RPF)
- Clay | Dream Needs a Hug (Video Blogging RPF)

- Cancer
- Terminal Illnesses
- Social Media
- Discussions of death
- Two Endings
- one is happy and one is sad
- this whole fic is sad with bits of fluff tbh
- Hurt Clay | Dream (Video Blogging RPF)
- Clay | Dream Has a Bad Time (Video Blogging RPF)
- dream team is friendship goals

Language:

English

Series:

Part 1 of the (Re)Mission series

Collections:

wheats mcyt fic recs, We sippin dream tears tonight bros, Chossi's fic recommendations for the soul, Dream SMP fics that butter my bread, Completed stories I've read, Purrsonal Picks

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# (Re)Mission

attentiveanxiety

## Summary:

It's Sapnap who pointed it out. On stream, too, when they're arguing about who would win manhunt in real life.

"But here's the thing. Dream bruises really easily. No way someone that bruises like that can win."

"I do not!" Dream rolled up his sleeves. No one else could see it, but he still wanted to prove it for himself.

What he saw made his stomach drop.

AKA Dream is a childhood cancer survivor. He hides it to forget, but familiar bruises and aches start coming back, and he's not so sure how much longer it can be a secret.

## Notes:

Song inspiration is Mission by Lupe Fiasco

I did my best to research the illness and procedures. I put more effort into researching cancer than I did with any of my courses this semester. Still, warning for possible medical inaccuracies.

## Chapter 1

## Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Wanna see my momma grow up

Hold up, hold up

Wanna see my daddy grow up

Hold up, Hold up

Dream doesn't like looking at pictures from his childhood. Which was ironic, considering they were currently the only pictures of himself out there.

Those pictures — the one he posted on Twitter forever ago, with him on the alligator, or the one his mom sent George of him in the Batman costume — those pictures were from before. In a way, those pictures were the most painful. They showed him happy, carefree, blissfully enjoying a normal childhood. They depicted what could've been; what should've been.

He had more pictures after than he did before. His mom never knew how long after would last. No one did, and so they counted every moment, capturing it like it could be his last. And wasn't that a fucking tragic reality for a ten-year-old? His mom once left work during the middle of the day, risking her job, just because she forgot to kiss him goodbye that morning. When he was eleven — the year when he was at his worst, and every day was spent in a bed away from home, in a sterilized room with only people in scrubs to be his friends — his mom quit her job so she could spend every day with him. And even though they had less income, his dad started working less in order to spend more time with Dream.

That was the worst year of Dream's life.

"No, dude, I'm telling you, in real life manhunt — none of you would stand a chance against me."

But that was then and this was now, and he hasn't seen that hospital room in nearly eight years, he hasn't been routinely poked and prodded in two. He joined the positive side of that stupid 5-year statistic when he was fifteen, went into remission at thirteen, and he hasn't looked back.

"You should test that when the Dream Team finally meets up," Karl asked. Dream was on stream with Sapnap and Karl. A dono asked who would win manhunt if they did it in real life, hence sparking the debate.

"Minecraft Speedrunner, but It's Florida," Sapnap snickered.

"In this video, we didn't code it because the real world is not Minecraft. This is literally thirty minutes of gamers trying to run," Dream said, laughing at his own joke.

"Well, we now know George won't be any use. Do you think I'll have to piggyback him like Wilbur?" said Sapnap.

Karl cackled. "No, no, no, that's how Dream loses. He'll get jealous that he's not the one piggybacking George."

Dream sputtered, running his Minecraft character over to punch at Karl's character. "No, I won't! I'm actually great at running in real life; I'll be so far ahead, you'll never stand a chance at catching me."

"Dream is actually the Flash, exposed?"

Sapnap wasn't accepting the obvious truth. "But here's the thing. Dream bruises really easily. No way someone that bruises like that can win."

"I do not!" Dream rolled up his sleeves. No one else could see it, but he still wanted to prove it for himself.

What he saw made his stomach drop.

"-I'm telling you, one shove and he'll turn purple. Don't let him fool you, chat, Dream is soft."

"Can we get hashtag SoftDream trending on Twitter?"

How could he not have noticed? How long has he been ignoring this? He knew to watch out for bruising. It was one of the symptoms that made his mom take him to the hospital to run tests; tests that soon turned before into after and ruined everything then. He knew there was a possibility that it could come back, they warned him at every routine checkup. You weren't considered cured until you were ten years into remission, and even then, there was no guarantee. Dream was eight years in. He should've known to check.

There was a deep purple bruise on his left forearm and another on his elbow — when did those get there? — and a fading bruise on his bicep from when Sapnap punched him over a week ago. He remembered getting that bruise, he remembered Sapnap feeling guilty because he didn't mean to punch Dream that hard; he was just playing around.

"Don't worry about it, you really didn't hurt me. I just bruise easy," Dream had said, wanting to make Sapnap feel better. He didn't even think about what his words meant. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

"Wow, Dream, you're not even going to argue?" Sapnap said, and Dream jolted. Shit, they were streaming.

"Maybe he secretly likes being called soft," Karl laughed. Dream's nose crinkled and he punched Karl's character again, making his friend shriek.

"I do not. And I'm not soft. Sapnap is just a bully who punches his friend's arms really hard."

"Dream!" Sapnap was so loud, he could hear him from the other room. Dream laughed, but it wasn't as genuine as usual. His stomach clenched, and he felt like he might be sick.

"Chat, I swear, I do not. Dream told me himself that he bruises easily."

"Sounds like an excuse to me, Sappy," Dream said. His hands were shaking, anxiety wracking his whole body. He didn't want to look, especially not on stream, but his mind was losing it. He could barely focus on the stream anymore. He decided to look under his shirt and check his torso, wondering just how much he missed.

He flipped up his hoodie and found evenly pale skin — he hasn't gotten much sun, coming out of winter — with freckles dotting across. From the front, he couldn't see any purple splotches. He tried to look at his back, but it was hard without a mirror. From what he saw, there wasn't anything on his back either.

But that didn't make any sense. If this was really that, he would have tons of bruises, blotchy and dark and painful from the smallest of hits. He remembered being covered in them growing up, to the point that he hated wearing anything that showed his skin; he still did, often wearing a hoodie and sweatpants even when he lived in Florida.

So maybe it was a fluke. Maybe these were normal bruises, and the one on the forearm probably happened on accident when he wasn't paying attention. He hit his elbow on things all the time. Maybe this wasn't that and he was just overreacting.

Dream signed, running a hand through his hair — a habit he picked up when he was finally able to grow it back. It was a reminder that he was okay. God, he

was being more paranoid than his mom. That first year in remission, any bruise she saw, and she rushed him back to the hospital.

“Dreammm, tell everyone I’m not a bad friend that beats people up,” Sapnap whined. The anxiety fading away, Dream felt that playful jitter taking over. He brought the mic really close to his lips so he could whisper dramatically.

“Send help. He’s holding me hostage,” he said, barely able to contain his laughter. Sapnap screamed again, and Dream let it out, wheezing so hard he collapsed back in the chair. The anxiety expelled from his body. This is the now, he reminded himself. Now, he is an extremely successful streamer, the founder of the DreamSMP. Now, he has tons of friends from all over the world, and millions of fans that support him, and it’s everything that he could ever imagine and more.

He’s Dream the Minecraft YouTuber. He’s not Clay the Cancer Kid. Not anymore, and never again.

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That night, he got a text from his little sister.

**favorite brat**

You’re bruising again?

Dream sighed, shoving his face deeper into his pillow.

**best brother**

it’s fine, I swear. no need to worry

Drista was only three when he got diagnosed. Every time his mom was at Dream’s side, Drista usually came with her. Her first memories of Dream were of



him sickly, bald, and dying. It bothered him more than he liked admitting, especially since she grew up just as worried and scared for him.

**favorite brat**

You sure???

**best brother**

100%. don't tell mom tho. I don't want her to stress

**favorite brat**

She's going to be upset if she finds out you didn't tell her

I won't tell her. Just don't be stupid and ignore it, stupid. If it gets bad and you still won't say anything, I will

**best brother**

ok thanks

He scrolled through social media, retweeted a fanart of #BullySapnap (which was still trending, though not as much as #DreamisSoft was trending), and even watched a little bit of Quackity's late-night stream with Bad. And then he went to sleep like normal. Because everything was absolutely, completely normal.

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He remembered the last day of the before when his family went on a trip to the beach. They hadn't been in a while, and he just wanted to get in the water. But his mom pulled him back so she could lather on sunscreen. He remembered squirming against her cold hands as she rubbed it down his back, his eyes

locked on the ocean in front of him. Suddenly, his mom pulled him closer and stared intensely at his side.

"What's this?" she asked, raising Dream's arm to get a better look. "Honey, come look at this."

His dad came over and inspected the same area. Dream squirmed uncomfortably.

"Clay, do you know how you got this? Did you play in something you weren't supposed to? Touch a weird plant?" his dad asked. Dream shook his head.

"No."

"Does it itch? Hurt?"

"No. They're freckles," he said. He noticed the cluster of red dots a couple of days ago. They're a different color than his other light brown freckles, sure, but he didn't think anything about it.

"These aren't freckles, sweetie," his mom said. Her face was pinched and she wouldn't stop touching Dream's side. He pushed her hand away.

"Can I go play now?" he asked, watching his older sister run out into the waves. His parents exchanged a glance before nodding. Dream cheered and sprinted into the water, splashing his sister and giggling.

That was his last day of childhood. The next day, his mother took him to the hospital, and everything became after.

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They were on stream again. It was for the latest Tales from the SMP stream, with Karl, Tommy, Ranboo, George, Sapnap, and Hannah. It was going well;

there were lots of funny moments while still keeping on the plot, the fans were going crazy about it in chat and on Twitter. He was joking around with Hannah's character when he felt something wet drip onto his lip. He thought it was snot (which- gross) and swiped it away with his hand. When his hand returned to his keyboard, there was a massive smear of red across it.

Oh. Oh.

"Shit," he breathed, pushing away his mic and pinching the bridge of his nose. He hung his head forward, and blood dribbled down his lips and chin, dripping onto his sweater. He scrambled for something to catch the blood with, accidentally knocking his water bottle off the desk. It clattered to the floor.

"Dream? Are you okay?" Hannah asked, and suddenly no one was paying attention to the roleplay anymore.

"Dream? What's wrong?" George asked.

"What was that sound?" said Ranboo.

There weren't any tissues within reach, and he didn't want to get up and turn his bedroom into a crime scene. The blood was coming fast and heavy, making a mess of his clothes. At this point, his sweater was beyond saving. He bunched up his right sleeve and held them under while pinching with the other hand.

"Dream? Dude, answer," Sapnap said.

"Sorry," he said, his voice probably muffled under his hand. "I, uh...it's a nosebleed. I'm fine."

"Shit, Dream," Tommy said.

"Do you need me to bring you anything?" Sapnap offered. Dream paused to think about it; while he wished he had a cold compress or a washcloth right

now, he really didn't want Sapnap to see how bad it was, nor did he want to worry the fans.

"No, it's fine. Just give me a minute," Dream lied.

"Make sure you're leaning forward and not back," Karl advised, and Dream wanted to laugh; they thought he didn't know how to treat a nosebleed.

"Use tampons," Ranboo said, and Sapnap sputtered.

"We don't have tampons?"

"I'll send you some," Hannah offered.

"Please don't."

"Please do. Who has Dream's address? Someone give it to Hannah," Tommy laughed.

"Dream," George's voice broke through the chaos. "Are you sure you're okay?"

His tone told Dream that George knew he was lying. Because of course George could tell. Dream sighed.

"I'll be fine in a bit. It's already slowing down." That was a total lie. The blood was not slowing down. It was flowing steadily. A tingling, fogging sensation tickled the back of his mind, and he knew nausea was just around the corner.

"Don't push yourself too hard, big man. We can't have you dying of a nosebleed on stream," Tommy teased, but there was a caring tone to it.

"Chat, Sapnap did not punch Dream in the nose, stop saying that," Karl said, eliciting a loud, "WHAT?" from Sapnap.

Dream slouched forward in his chair, feeling more and more miserable by the minute. The nosebleed was persistent, and to make matters worse, they all paused the roleplay for him. Everyone was going to quickly realize that this wasn't a normal nosebleed when he wasn't ready to go again soon.

"Hey, I'm going to go clean up in the bathroom. You guys can go ahead without me, I'll be back quick."

He didn't wait to hear the replies, muting himself and ripping off his headphones. The moment he stood, a wave of lightheadedness hit him. He stumbled out of his bedroom and down the hall to the bathroom, trying not to touch anything with his bloody hands. When he got there, he immediately turned on the faucet and let the blood buildup just drip. It was disgusting and only made him more nauseous to watch. He washed most of the blood off his hands before unraveling a massive wad of toilet paper. He doused it in water and shoved it under his nose without fanfare.

This wasn't good. First the bruising, now a nosebleed? Obviously, there's no guarantee, and they're such different early symptoms from before, so passable as nothing. The saying was that twice was a coincidence and three's a pattern, but if he gets this wrong...if he brushes it off as nothing when it is something, then he could end up dead.

Catching it early is the most important thing, his doctor said every time he went in for a yearly checkup. A checkup he hasn't gone to since he became a legal adult.

"Dream? You good?" Sapnap knocked on the door because of course he would check up on Dream. He was stupid to think they'd actually continue on without him. The door pushed open before he could stop it. "I googled some tips to get blood out of clothes in case you got any- what the fuck?!"

Dream stood there, literally red-handed — he's already bled through the wad of toilet paper. Sapnap stared at the blood coating Dream's once gray hoodie with sickening horror. He probably looked like a murder victim and a murder suspect at the same time.

"What the hell?" Sapnap rushed forward but paused with his hands hovering, not even sure what to do. "Is that normal? That's so much blood- do you need to go to a hospital?"

Sapnap pulled out his phone like he was already planning to call 911. Dream shook his head. "No, no. Can you just- get me something cold to put on it? Like an icepack?"

Sapnap nodded, looking as pale as Dream. He stumbled out of the bathroom while Dream deposited the bloody toilet paper in the trash and grabbed a new wad. His legs felt shaky, so he put down the toilet seat to sit on it.

Sapnap rushed back in. "I couldn't find an icepack, so I grabbed frozen peas. Will that work?" Dream nodded, and Sapnap passed it over. It felt nice against his clammy face. "I'm going to get you a new sweater. Don't move."

"Wasn't going to." Dream took deep breaths and focused on the cold sensation of the frozen peas. No doubt Drista would hear about this too, if she wasn't already watching the stream herself. She wasn't going to let him sweep this under the rug.

Sapnap returned with a black hoodie and wipes. He helped Dream peel off the bloody hoodie, and Dream sat there shirtless, waiting for the nosebleed to stop. Sapnap fidgeted, his eyes snapping back to the bloodstains.

"Does this happen a lot or...?"

"Huh?" Dream mumbled, throwing out another wad of toilet paper. It seemed the frozen peas were working; it took a lot longer to soak through that time.

"Well, this is definitely the biggest nosebleed I've seen in my life, and I played football in high school. But you seem pretty calm about it."

"Oh. I don't know. Is it really that bad?" Dream mumbled, trying to play it off. Everything was getting fuzzy.

Sapnap scoffed. "Yeah, dude, it's bad."

And to make it better, it's probably way worse than you're imagining, Dream thought about saying, but he kept his mouth shut. He's not dropping this on Sapnap, not like this.

"I feel like I'm dying," Dream said instead. It's technically not a lie, if his suspicions were correct. Sapnap laughed.

"Yeah, you kind of look like you died too."

It took another five minutes for the bleeding to slow down until it was manageable, and another five after that to finally stop. Sapnap wiped down the blood from the bathroom for Dream. Dream put on the black sweater and tossed the bloodied one in the trash can. There was no saving it at this point.

"You feeling better?" Sapnap asked, resting a hand on his friend's shoulder. In all honesty, Dream felt like he got run over and tossed off a cliff, and all he wanted to do was climb into bed and never leave. He couldn't say that, though. The fans would get way too suspicious if he didn't come back on stream.

"Yeah. Thanks for helping me with that," Dream said, forcing himself to stand. He tried not to sway too obviously, but Sapnap still eyed him.

"Of course, Dream, don't sweat it."

He walked back to his room, trying to act as normal as possible because he knew Sapnap was watching. He eyed his computer with growing disdain — he knew he was going to be bombarded with questions the moment he went back, and his bed looked more inviting than it ever has. He forced himself to sit down in his chair. There was blood smeared on his desk a bit, so he got up to grab a towel to wipe it off before putting his headphones back on.

“-taking a long time, should we be worried?”

“Sap is with him at least.”

Dream took a deep breath and unmuted himself. “Hey, sorry about that.”

“Dream!” His friends shouted into their mics.

“We thought you were dead,” Tommy commented.

“Is everything alright? You were gone for, like, twenty minutes,” George asked. Dream laughed off their concern.

“Yeah, I’m all good now,” He was the opposite of good. “I couldn’t get it to stop, but Sapnap helped me.”

“The bathroom looked like a fucking crime scene, you should have seen it,” Sapnap said.

“Ew, no thanks,” Hannah cringed.

“Are you sure you’re good to continue, Dream?” checked Karl. Dream rubbed his face; he could feel the headache settling in.

“Of course. It was nothing, guys. I’m fine.”

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Dream was not fine.

He laid in bed; he's been here all day. He was supposed to join Quackity's stream an hour ago, but he couldn't move even if he wanted to. His body felt so heavy, so exhausted, even picking up his phone to check the time felt like a task. He knew the nosebleed last night was making the fatigue worse, but it just confirmed everything Dream suspected.

The light from his phone hurt his eyes, and he could barely focus on anything because of his pounding headache. He scrolled past dozens of concerned messages from his friends until he found his mom's contact. He hit call. She answered by the second ring.

"Clay? Are you okay? Your sister told me you got a nosebleed yesterday--"

"Mom." His voice was thick with bubbling emotions. Tears blurred his vision. "I think it's back."

There was a long pause. "You've been having symptoms?"

Dream nodded even though she couldn't see. "I noticed bruising a week ago."

"A week? Clay--"

"It wasn't that bad so I didn't think..." His body shuddered as he swallowed a sob. "I know it was stupid to brush it off, but I really thought it was nothing — I-I needed it to be nothing, but now--"

"Shh, shh, sweetie, it's okay. You're okay. So you're bruising again, and you got a bad nosebleed last night. What are the other symptoms?"

"Fatigue. Headache. Nausea."

"Any petechiae? Fever? Swelling?"

"No. Not yet."

His mother sighed. "I'm taking you to the hospital. You're at home, right?"

Dream hummed. "Is Nick there with you?"

"Don't- I don't want him to know."

"Clay-"

"Not yet, Mom. Please? Not until we know for sure. I...I don't want to worry him."

His mom was silent. He could hear her grabbing her keys and opening the door.

"You'll have to tell him soon, sweetie. If the tests come back positive, you shouldn't lie to him."

"I know. I won't." He wanted to; if it was his choice, his friends would never, ever learn about this side of him. But he knew how unrealistic that was; he couldn't live with someone without them noticing his treatment, and he's not going to disappear on Sapnap over this. Dream's stomach lurched when he thought of the fans. What the hell was he going to say to them?

"I'll be there soon, sweetie." He could hear his mom rolling out of the driveway. She was trying to hide the fact that she was crying. "I'm sorry, Clay. I'm so, so sorry."

Dream didn't say anything; he wasn't sure there was anything to say. He closed his eyes and waited for his mother to come.

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**Miki | COMMISSIONS OPEN** @mikidraws

ok but is dream good? like he had a nosebleed? for 20 minutes?? and no one's talking about it???

**Rat Stan** @ratlovesbad1

Replying to @mikidraws

No but actually? And he was so quiet for the rest of the stream, I hope he's ok

**tommy go brr** @slebbypois

Replying to @ratlovesbad1

he was probably suffering from blood loss ngl

**Eryn <3** @eryniscrying

Replying to @mikidraws

Reminder that Dream is a real person and we shouldn't speculate and spread rumors about his health like this! It's okay to wish for your favorite creators to stay healthy, but please don't overstep their boundaries or harass them on stream about it :)

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They took a blood sample test, along with a couple other tests. The doctors wanted to make sure it wasn't anything else. Dream knew it wasn't.

He texted Sapnap to let him know he was spending the night with his family. He knew from past experience that the hospital would usually call with his results by morning, and he didn't want his best friend to see him when he did. He barely slept at all that night — partially because of the paranoia and anxiety, but also because his whole body just ached. He couldn't get comfortable, and he

kept getting these sharp pains any time he tried adjusting his position. He stayed up all night, thinking about every way this could go wrong. There were so many ways, being as famous as he was. How do you break the news that you could be dying not only to 21 million fans, but the other millions of haters and random people on the internet? Would he be forced to face reveal early? Or while he was on chemo? He could already see the posts on Twitter making fun of him for being bald. He grabbed at his hair — God, he didn't want to go through that again.

But it wasn't his choice, huh?

He was beyond exhausted, laying in his room when the call came. He thought about calling his mom in but decided against it.

"Hello?"

"Hi, am I speaking with Clay?"

"Yeah."

"Hi. This is Doctor Shuels from Orlando Regional Medical Center. I'm calling about your blood test. Your preliminary results came in last night, and it looks like your leukemia has relapsed."

Dream didn't react. He didn't even blink.

"Your file shows that you were previously treated at AdventHealth in Orlando. If you would like to continue your treatment there, I will send the test results there. You were treated by Doctor Wilson, correct?"

"Y-Yeah."

"Would you like me to send you results there so they can contact you about a treatment plan?"

Dream didn't trust his voice not to break again, so he just hummed.

"Okay. They will contact you immediately. I strongly advise you to go in today. I'm sure you know this, but the earlier we attack this, the better."

"Mmm."

"Do you have any other questions for me?"

"No."

Dream hung up the moment the doctor said goodbye. A growing fire churned in his stomach as he stared at his phone and, in a fit of blind rage, he threw it across the room. He watched it collide with the wall, heard it shatter on impact and clatter to the ground.

And then he lost it.

He screamed. He screamed and cried and punched and kicked. Anything he touched, he threw; pillows, books, his chair, an old football trophy, a framed picture of him on his Make-A-Wish trip. When there was nothing left to throw, he grabbed at his hair and pulled on it until tears sprung in his eyes. Once those tears started, they didn't stop, even after he stopped tugging his hair. They streaked down his face in hot, large droplets that felt like they burned his skin. His vision blurred, and he felt himself falling. He landed on his knees hard, and he knew the bruise would be ugly and dramatic.

It was supposed to get better. Things were better. That was supposed to be then and this was supposed to be now but now then was turning into now except it's so much worse because he's at the height of his success right now, with so much in sight — the remainder of the SMP, meeting George, meeting everyone else, doing cons, revealing his face, dropping more of his music, getting a new speedrun record, moving in together as the Dream Team. And not to mention

everything past his YouTube career like finding someone to fall in love with, settling down, and living a long, healthy life with them. All these goals, ripped away like that.

His mom came in and found him sobbing on the floor. She didn't need to ask. She already knew. They all did.

She hugged him tight, whispering sweet promises and apologies as she kissed his head. When he started to calm down, she helped him stand and led him to the bed. She tucked him in, grabbing the pillows up off the ground. Then she walked over and grabbed his phone. The screen was wrecked, but it still worked. She waited with him until Doctor Wilson called, and stayed with him to help him through the call.

"Clay! It's been a while, huh?"

Dream had nothing to say to that.

He started talking about a treatment plan of action and tests they needed to run — they needed to make sure it was ALL that came back and that he didn't develop AML or one of the chronic forms. Dream let the doctor and his mom do most of the talking.

"-come in later today so we can get started-"

"I can't," Dream snapped, making them pause.

"Clay?" his mom said.

"I can't go in today. I-I need time." He knew the moment he went to start his treatment, he wouldn't be out for at least two weeks. He couldn't just disappear like that, not without an explanation. The problem was, he wasn't sure he was

ready to tell the world the truth. Hell, he wasn't sure he was ready to tell Sapnap and George.

"You know time is what we're fighting for, Clay. Every day we waste could be a year in the long run."

Dream's heart clenched, but he stayed firm. "Give me until the end of the week. I'll come in then. I just need some time first."

He couldn't explain it more to his doctor without giving himself away, so he turned to his mom. She understood. He could see it through the pain in her eyes. He mentally pleaded for her to be on his side, and her lip quivered with indecision.

"We'll see you in two days for treatment, Dr. Wilson," she said, and Dream collapsed back into his pillow. When she finally hung up on the doctor, she turned back to him. "I'm serious, Clay. I'm not expecting you to tell your fans or even your friends, but you must explain this to Nick. Unless you want to move fully back home — which I'm still thinking about making you do, though I know it would put Nick in an awkward position — then you need to tell him. He's going to have to be there for you."

It was so frustrating to be forced to do this; to put all this stress on Sapnap. Obviously, he would have a choice; they weren't forcing him to become Dream's at-home nurse. But he knew his best friend, and he knew Sapnap wouldn't hesitate to agree. His friend would stick through it all, and that was the worst part. Dream knows what it'll do to him; he's seen it with his parents, his siblings. He's seen it in the way his mom still hugs him longer than anyone else when he leaves, or the way Drista panics anytime she has to go to the hospital.

Sapnap will be watching him die. Even if he makes it into remission, there will be months where Sapnap will have to watch Dream wither away into a pale,

bald skeleton shot up with chemicals. He'll wake up every morning wondering if Dream made it through the night okay. He couldn't do that to Sapnap.

But then again, how much worse would it be if he didn't say anything at all?

**Dream**

are you streaming tomorrow?

**Sapnap**

Not planning on it why

**Dream**

there's something I need to tell you

Notes:

Me: has final exams

My hyperfixation: writes eight chapters of this in a week instead

## Chapter 2

Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Chapter Test

Pink ribbon women she gonna live forever



Even though the doctor say she only get a month

Said it's my life and you only get it once

Dream spent the entire morning avoiding Sapnap.

His mom dropped him off at his own house with firm instructions to 'get it done' and to let her know how he was feeling every few hours. Dream promised and snuck into the house — Sapnap was either out or in his room, thank goodness — slipped into his bedroom, and hasn't come out since.

Was there any benefit to what he was doing whatsoever? No, not even the slightest. He was being a coward that hid from his friends and his problems. All he was doing was making it harder in the long run. Still, here he was, lying in bed, watching some random show on Netflix and pretending nothing was wrong.

A notification flashed on his screen. It was a message from Quackity.

### **Quackity**

hey dude. you missed the stream the other day and I just wanted to make sure you were good? I heard you weren't feeling well on karl's stream so I figured you were sick

Dream sighed and forced himself to sit up, ignoring the heavy fatigue weighing down his body.

**Dream**

yeah sorry about that, I completely slept through it. I've been feeling under the weather lately

I went to the doctor tho and I should be fine soon

Lie. Lie, lie, lie, lie, lie. He was a goddamn liar, and right to his friend's faces.

**Quackity**

the doctor???

**Dream**

I'm rich, I can afford bills

**Quackity**

fuck you man

stream later tonight?

if youre feeling better

**Dream**

idk

**Quackity**

gogy will be there

**Dream**

maybe

**Quackity**

BAHAHAHAHAHA

ok feel better dont die

Night rolled around. He got a message from Quackity checking on him again, but he ignored it. When he got the notification that Quackity was live, Dream, not really thinking, clicked it and opened up the Twitch app. It was George, Sapnap, Karl, and Quackity, he realized with a jolt. He didn't know it was going to be a feral boys stream; didn't Sapnap say he wasn't streaming today? Why didn't Quackity mention it? Now it looked weird with him sitting out.

He pulled down his notification screen and saw that Quackity had, indeed, told him that Sapnap and Karl agreed to join later that day. Dream had just been too tired to read. He groaned and scanned Quackity's chat. Fans noticed his absence and were spamming to ask where he was. The other four ignored it, however, and continued to mess around on Minecraft. Even when he got donos about it, Quackity just dodged the question. But then one dono finally made him snap.

**was dream kicked out of the feral boys or did you just not invite him?  
love you all xoxo**

"Chat. Look. Dream was invited, and he's still a part of the feral boys, so stop freaking out. He's just not feeling too well right now."

"I'm pretty sure he's sleeping. He has been all day," Sapnap explained.

George snickered. "Aww, sick Dreamie."

"Did you go and give him sick cuddles, Sapnap?" cooed Karl, making Quackity laugh and demand Sapnap answer.

"What, no? I don't want to get sick too," Sapnap said. Dream barked with laughter along with the others — though not for the same reasons.

"Are you confirming you and Dream cuddle when he's not sick, then?" George questioned, making Sapnap sputter.

All of the sudden, chat started spamming Dream's name again. Many were talking about him being sick or cuddling Sapnap, but when he forced the chat to pause, he realized a lot of people noticed he was watching the stream. Of course, just seconds later, a dono felt like informing Quackity about it.

**Dream is watching the stream right now. I hope you feel better soon, Dream.**

"Dream! Wait, is he actually watching?" Quackity said. It was too late to hop off now; it would look suspicious if he did.

"Wait, why didn't he just join in?" asked George.

Karl snickered. "He's probably so jealous we're talking with George, he magically cured himself."

The others laughed and played into the joke, but Dream felt a bitter pang in his chest. Oh, if only it worked that way, Karl.

"Someone call him. I'm gonna call him," Quackity decided. Within seconds, his phone started ringing. He groaned and contemplated ignoring it before deciding it would be less painful speculation-wise to just pick up.

"Hello?" he said. His voice was groggy and hoarse from not being used today, and he hated it — hated how sick it made him sound.

"Dream!" Quackity shouted. He couldn't hear the others anymore since he closed out of the stream to answer the call, but they were probably screaming as well. "My friend, my Dream, what are you doing?"

"I'm still lying in bed," he said. Quackity muffled his snickers.

"And you woke up to watch us? Aww, Dream."

Dream blushed for no real reason. "Yeah, so?"

Quackity cackled. Dream wished he could watch the stream right now. He eyed his setup, but the thought of leaving his bed right now was even less appealing than food. Shit, when was the last time he ate?

"-you feeling?"

Dream blinked back to the present. "Huh?"

Quackity laughed, though it sounded a little uncertain. "Wow, you're really out of it. Are you on drugs right now, Dream?"

"Don't- Don't say it like that."

"Was that a confession? Are you high on meds?"

Not yet. "Shut up."

---

Late that night, there was a knock on his door. Sapnap came in seconds later with a bowl in his hands.

"I brought you soup. You haven't left the room yet, so I figured you haven't been eating." Dream sheepishly forced himself to sit up and take the bowl. He still wasn't hungry, but he knew he should eat. "What was it you wanted to talk about? When you texted me yesterday?"

Now Dream really wasn't hungry.

He stared down at the soup, unable to meet Sapnap's eyes. He should just say it. Put it out there, rip off the bandaid. His doctor always talked about it so easily. He just stated it like it was another fact, not that he was announcing the ruination of Dream's life. All he has to do was tell Sapnap he has leukemia.

"I'm dying."

God-fucking-damnit.

Sapnap's eyes widened and Dream could see that he stopped breathing. He immediately backtracked to salvage it.

"Shit- That's not what I meant. I'm not dying. I mean, I am, but not like, soon." Sapnap started choking, and Dream put the soup on the bedside table and grabbed his friend's arm. "Hopefully, I'm not dying at all. It's just — what I was trying to fucking tell you, instead of sounding like an idiot..."

Dream took a deep breath. "I have leukemia."

There. He said it.

Sapnap's jaw dropped. "You what?"

Dream's throat clogged up. He knew. After years of knowing each other, Sapnap knew. And worst of all, it wasn't in past tense.

"You-You-You- That's why you've been sick? With- With the bruising, and the nosebleed? You have-" Sapnap collapsed on the bed, pulling at his hair. "You have cancer?"

Dream could only nod. His hands clenched his covers, wanting to pull them over his head so he could hide. He resisted the urge.

"When did you find out?"

"Yesterday," Dream finally croaked. Sapnap looked like he was about to make himself sick, and Dream prayed he didn't. He would not be able to take it if Sapnap threw up right now.

"And- And when do they start treatment?"

"I go in tomorrow. They'll probably start me on chemo immediately."

"Chemo?" Sapnap sounded strangled. "Dude, you're-"

He couldn't finish his statement. Sapnap violently brushed away the tears that kept forming. Oddly enough, Dream wasn't crying; he felt numb, hollow — a sharp contrast from his fit yesterday.

"They'll keep me in the hospital full-time for a few weeks, just in case they need to do blood transfusions or anything. Plus, they'll want to monitor how I respond to the drugs. After that, I'll come back home and I'll only have to go in at least once a week for infusions."

Sapnap took deep, heavy breaths while Dream picked at his cuticles. Neither of them said anything.

"You seem really calm about it again."

Dream jumped. "Huh?"

"You just- I'm sorry, that was so fucking rude of me. You literally have cancer and I'm freaking out and I didn't know why you weren't, but obviously, you're not obligated to freak out. I'm just being an asshole."

"You're not. I actually did freak out last night, but...I don't know. In a way, I've kind of been bracing for it."

"...what does that mean?"

"You know how I don't like looking at pictures of me as a kid?"

Sapnap nodded.

"Well...this isn't my first time getting diagnosed with leukemia."

Dream could practically hear Sapnap's heart break. He hated it.

"How...How old?"

"I was ten."

"Were you sick when we met?"

Dream chuckled sadly, shaking his head. "I went into remission fully when I was about thirteen." That was when he started playing Minecraft online. He met Sapnap a few months later, and then Bad just after that.

Sapnap nodded. "I'm so sorry, Dream."

Dream has never heard Sapnap sound this emotional, this heartbroken, and Dream was there for him at his worst moments. When the stress was at an all-time high and everything felt like it was becoming too much, Dream was there. He reached out, wanting to comfort his best friend, and ended up pulling Sapnap into a tight hug. Sapnap squeezed back hard, his body shuddering as he cried. Dream closed his eyes, tears leaking through.

"You- You don't have to help me," Dream suddenly said, pulling back from the hug so he could look Sapnap in the eye. "I can move back to my parent's house, I'm sure that'll make my mom happy anyway. I'm not expecting you to drop everything or go through it with me--"

"Whoa, whoa, Dream. I'm not fucking leaving you to deal with this. Are you kidding me?"



"I'm serious, Sapnap. This isn't a matter of being a good friend or not."

"What kind of friend leaves because of a cancer diagnosis?"

"Do you realize that if you stay and help me through this, you're going to be watching me die?" Sapnap's mouth snapped shut. "It's not pretty, Nick. I'm going to be ill and helpless, and the drugs that are supposed to be keeping the cancer from killing me are going to look like they're hurting me more. There's a chance it could hurt me more. I'm not saying I'm actually going to die from this but...it won't look much different sometimes."

Flashes from then came to mind. Of five-year-old Drista holding his hand to comfort him during one of his checkups, of his dad holding him tight during his first infusions, of his mom sleeping by his side in the hospital bed. He tried to imagine Sapnap there, but he couldn't bring his heart to do it.

Suddenly, he was being enveloped in a tight bear hug. "I know. But you're my best friend. I'm not going to just fucking ditch you."

Dream hugged Sapnap back and let himself cry.

---

"What are you going to tell the others? Or the fans?"

They stayed up all night talking about the disease, about his experience with it as a child. Dream didn't like talking about it, but Sapnap wanted to know. He demanded to see pictures of Dream bald, which Dream refused. Not only was it embarrassing, but he didn't have any on hand. He didn't keep those memories on his phone.

"Don't worry, you'll find out what I look like bald in about a month," Dream had said nonchalantly. Sapnap stopped laughing. Dream quickly changed the subject after that.

Dream paused to consider Sapnap's question. "I'm not sure. I don't...I don't think I want the others to know yet, you know? At least not everything. It's not- It's not something I like sharing." He shifted uncomfortably. "I think I'll just be vague and say I'm really sick — make it sound like mono or something."

It was probably the best idea. People might make fun of him for it — he can already see the tweets asking who he's kissing — but it was better than the truth.

"Are you going to tell them eventually? You said it could take what? Two? Three years before you're fully declared in remission? Isn't that a long time to hide things...?"

He was right. Sapnap was so, so right. But just thinking about it made his throat tighten and his chest constrict and his heart pound and his head spin. There's no avoiding it. His fans were expecting a face reveal, goddamnit. He promised it would happen in a year or so, when COVID was over and George could finally come.

Shit, George.

"You don't have to decide now. Just, like, think about it," Sapnap assured him.

"Yeah," Dream muttered distantly. "I should tell George, shouldn't I?"

"Um. I'm not going to force you?"

"But I should, right? Like it would be pretty shit of me to not say anything to him. I can't lie to him about this."

"Whatever you want to do, dude--"

"Sapnap!"

"Okay! You should tell him! Is that what you want to hear?" Sapnap laughed.

"What's the point of asking if you already know the answer?"

"Validation," Dream muttered. A new level of anxiety settled in. He probably would have to call George soon. "How should I tell him though?"

"Well, probably don't start with 'I'm dying' again."

"That was an accident! I panicked!"

"You panicked? I think my heart actually stopped!"

"Okay, okay, I'm sorry," Dream huffed. "But actually, what should I say?"

Sapnap shrugged. "Just be straight about it. There's no way to say it easily. George would probably just get pissed if you talked all cryptically."

Dream nodded. "You're right. I think I'm just going to call him and tell him."

"Do you want me to be there? I can give y'all your space if you want."

Dream paused to consider it. "I think I want to tell him alone, if that's cool."

"Of course, dude." Sapnap stood up to leave, but then he froze, staring at Dream intensely. He pulled Dream into another hug, and Dream was so shocked he barely remembered to react. Despite the big game Sapnap talked on stream, he wasn't that physically affectionate, and he rarely initiated it. When he pulled back, Dream could see he was near tears again. "I'm going to go but...can we talk more tonight? Please?"

Dream was exhausted, but he agreed. Sapnap was doing a good job at hiding it, but Dream knew what it looked like when someone was hiding a breakdown. Sapnap was probably waiting until he was alone to lose it, which Dream could respect. Still, he didn't want to abandon his friend completely in a mental state like this; especially not when he was already asking for help.

God, I hope this doesn't destroy you, Sapnap.

---

Even though it was three in the morning in the UK, George picked up Dream's call immediately.

"Dream? Are you okay? Aren't you sick? You should be resting."

Remember how Sapnap told Dream to 'tell it to George straight'? Because Dream couldn't. He couldn't remember anything.

"I want to do a face reveal. Soon."

There's a long pause on the other line. "Uh...what?" George laughed uncomfortably. "Are you actually high on medication right now? What have you taken?"

"Nothing. I haven't taken anything."

"Uh-huh."

"George," he said his name as firmly as possible so the other boy would know he wasn't joking. George stopped laughing.

"Wait...you're serious then?"

"Dead serious." Dream flinched when he realized his unintentional pun.

"But why? We've been planning to wait until after we met up for years now."

Dream sighed, frustrated. "Because I want them to see me now, George."

"But why?"

"Because I have leukemia!"

He should get a fucking oscar at this point for the dramatics of these reveals.

George didn't say anything for a long time, so Dream just kept talking.

"I- I have leukemia, and I already know how this is going to go because I was a fucking cancer kid and now I've relapsed eight years into remission and everything is going to total shit right now, but I just want them to see my face now because I go into chemo tomorrow and I know what it's going to do to me, and I don't want the first time that they see me to be when I'm sickly and bald and ugly-"

"Dream."

"-and I know we wanted to wait until we could be in person and do it together, but we don't have that fucking time, I mean I literally start treatment tomorrow and it could take a couple of years before I'm back to normal, and I don't want to wait that long-"

"Dream."

"-and what if I don't have that long? Because the survival rate for people my age is about 80% but what if it's different if you're a relapse patient? No, it has to be fucking lower-"

"Dream!"

He looked back at the computer and saw George. George had turned his camera on at some point, and though he couldn't see Dream, he could see George — see his tears, his wide, red-rimmed eyes. George hated crying, and he's never done it on camera. When his cat Luca passed, he announced it through Minecraft chat because he didn't want to cry on stream.

This is the first time he's seen George cry, Dream realized with a jolt. It just made everything so much worse.

"George," Dream said.

George rubbed at his face aggressively. "I can't- How long?"

He didn't specify, so Dream answered for both. "The first time was when I was ten. I learned that I relapsed yesterday."

"Do you know what your...have they predicted..."

With pained understanding, Dream answered the question George couldn't ask. "We won't know the prognosis until they confirm the type and classification."

George nodded and made a choked sound that Dream couldn't tell if it was a laugh or a sob. "God. I'm so not sleeping tonight. Why... You've never said anything about having cancer before."

"I didn't want anyone to know. I hate thinking back on that time of my life and all I've ever wanted was to move forward and forget."

George asked a lot more questions, clearly trying to process it logically and systematically. Dream answered them all. When he was explaining his current plan with the fans, George interrupted him abruptly.

"Don't reveal your face."

"Huh?"

"I mean- don't reveal your face early. Not for this. It's already taking so much from you. Don't let it take that away from you too."

"George." Dream could feel the frustration building. "I can't control that."

"I know that, but--"

"I could literally die before you ever get to see my face in person."

George inhaled sharply. "You're not going to die."

"I might. It's fucking cancer. It kills millions every year."

"If it comes to that — which it won't — then you can post an old picture. Or you can just show yourself as you are. I mean, I know I've only seen your face like, barley twice, but I don't think it will be that bad-."

"It is. Trust me. I don't want you or anyone to see me like that. I want people to see me happy and normal. I don't want the first image of me to be sickly and..."

"And bald?" George asked, an amused lit to his voice. Dream rolled his eyes.

"It's not as good as you may think."

George laughed, and while it was better than seeing him cry, Dream couldn't bring himself to laugh with him.

"George, I'm serious."

"And I'm serious too, Dream." George leveled a stare at his camera. "I'm not letting you do this. I don't care if you're bald or literally in a hospital bed, and I'm sure the fans will be the same way. Also, I'm still coming to see you."

"We don't know how long that could take, though." COVID, though finally slowing down in America and the UK, was still blocking international travel.

"I've heard rumors that the US is planning to reopen to vaccinated European travelers soon. I can finally move over there, I can help you and Sapnap with your treatments."

And as much as Dream wanted to see George, to finally hug him in person...it was probably the thing he wanted the least right now. He was already doing it to Sapnap. He didn't want to make both of his closest friends watch him suffer.

"I don't know if I want you to see me like that," Dream admitted. Hurt flashed across George's face before settling into something softer.

"I get that. And you don't have to listen to me. I just hate that it's something forcing you to do it."

And it totally was. A week ago, he wouldn't even entertain the idea of showing people his face early. They had a plan, and they were supposed to stick with it. He didn't want to reveal it early...but he also didn't want fucking cancer again.

He groaned and rubbed his face. "Fine. I won't face reveal. But the moment it opens up, you get a fucking visa and get over here."

George smiled and rolled his eyes. "Okay, Clay."

---

**Dream SMP Discord**

**Dream**



hey @everyone. so I'm sure some of you may have heard by now, but I've been pretty sick lately. I went to the doctor and we think it's mono. I will probably be out for two weeks and I don't think I can do any streaming, I'm sorry

**Puffy**

No worries! Rest well and feel better soon!

**Wilbur**

Don't stress about it, streaming will always be there when you come back so take care of yourself

**Tommy**

you better not stream before you're better or I'm telling your mother

**Karl**

Get well soon Dream!

---

**dream** @dreamwastaken

doctors think I have mono. I'm taking a two week break to heal up, so I will see you then

**soph** @pocketfullofraisshine

Replying to @dreamwastaken

GET WELL SOON DREAM

**i love my cat** @Tigerhaswhiskers

Replying to @dreamwastaken

Imao who is dream kissing??

**gogy** @georgenooootfoundd

Replying to @Tigerhaswhiskers and @dreamwastaken

George

**L U C A S** @breezinglife34

Replying to @Tigerhaswhiskers and @georgenooootfoundd

Lol George is in the UK, he's obvious kissing Sapnap

## **Trending**

1 . Trending

### **GET WELL SOON DREAM**

Trending with **Mono, George**

2 . Football . Trending

### **Eagles**

3. Politics . Trending

### **50% of Republicans**

4. Trending

## **#whokisseddream**

Fans of YouTuber Dream speculate who kissed him after Dream announced he has mono

---

He packed a suitcase, grabbed a stack of books, his laptop, and other things to entertain himself, and went to the hospital. He was lucky enough to have a cancer hospital that could treat him in Orlando, along with another huge center just over an hour away in Tampa. His mom sat in the front seat; his dad, Drista, and Sapnap all wanted to come with him, but with COVID, he was only allowed one visitor at a time, with a two visitor list max. It was frustrating because it made him choose, but he understood why. They decided to make Sapnap his second visitor since he would be driving Dream the most to his appointments.

When they pulled up, his mom reached back to hold his hand. She did that every time they went in for infusions as a kid.

"I'm right here, okay?"

It should be embarrassing now; he was twenty-one, not ten. But still, it warmed his heart and calmed his nerves, just like it did back then. He squeezed her hand back.

"I know."

Going into the cancer ward was strangely familiar while also completely unrecognizable. Obviously, a lot changed with COVID procedures, but everything also felt...smaller. It seemed so much scarier when he was a kid. It helped to calm his nerves. This wasn't going to be exactly like then. Things were different; he was different.

Two doctors came in to meet him. He immediately recognized Dr. Wilson, his childhood doctor. The other was a woman who introduced herself as Dr. Brett. Since Dr. Wilson specialized in childhood ALL, Dr. Brett would be taking over his treatments this time. They ordered a bone marrow biopsy, which he expected. He chose to get the local anesthetics instead of Benadryl to knock him out. He used to get that as a kid, and he always hated the feeling when he woke up from it.

"Do you want to see any of the tools first?" Dr. Brett asked. Dream shook his head. He remembered what they looked like.

He closed his eyes. They had him lying face down for the procedure. While he couldn't feel pain, he could still feel the pressure sensation as they drilled into his hip bone. After that, they stuck a needle in to pull the marrow out. He hated this procedure. Even on anesthetics, it still hurt like hell. There was a deep ache inside his bone, and he knew from previous experience that there was nothing the doctors could do to treat that. He just had to wait for it to fade away.

Once that was over and he recovered, they sent him to get his first infusion.

This was always the worst part.

They went over the whole cocktail of drugs they were filling him up, many he recognized — Vincristine, Cytosan, Pegaspargase — but still had no idea how to pronounce them or what they did. The first time or so, they would do it by IV, but soon he would get a PICC line. He hated that thing almost just as much, but at least it didn't hurt as bad as IV. His mom sat with him, petting his hair and kissing his forehead through her mask.

"This will take a couple of hours sweetheart. I'm sorry," the nurse said, readying the needle. Dream shrugged.

"Don't worry, I already know."

As expected, it hurt like a bitch. He got out his laptop to play Minecraft as a distraction, but his muscles kept tensing and twitching from pain, making him mess up a lot. Every time he did, his mother would soothe him. The nurse came to check on him a couple times. She paused when she saw what he was playing.

"We've got a little boy who's been here for a couple of months. He's always talking about that game," she laughed fondly. Dream smiled to be polite. "He has acute lymphoblastic leukemia too."

"How old is he?" his mother asked, her face soft with empathy

"Almost eleven. His birthday is in a month, I think."

Dream's heart sank. Same age as he had been back then. "Do they think he'll be back home in time?"

The nurse pursed her lips and shook her head. Dream turned back to his game, killing another creeper before it exploded.

"Do you think I could talk with Dr. Wilson? I know Clay isn't his patient anymore, but I just want to get his opinion on something," his mother asked. The nurse nodded.

"I believe he's on lunch, but you can come with me and we'll see if he's available."

His mom kissed his cheek and squeezed his hand. "I'll be back soon."

After over four hours of sitting there, the infusion was over. Not long after, Dr. Wilson and his mother came in. It was obvious his mother had been crying, which instantly put Dream on high alert. He closed his laptop and sat up straight.

"How are you doing, Clay? Did the infusion go alright?" Dr. Wilson said. Dream nodded, eyeing them.

"It was fine. Is something wrong?" After going through this for so long, his mom didn't cry about much. The fact that Dr. Wilson came with her only made him more anxious.

"Well, Clay, I never had to do this back when you were my patient since you were so little, but you're an adult now. We need to go over the statistics, just so you're completely aware of what we are dealing with here. Dr. Brett and I agreed it would be best if I talked with you, since you know me."

Dream's heart was already beating out of his chest. Statistics. He knew what that translated to. Prognosis. Survival-rate.

"Okay," he said, not trusting himself to say more. Dr. Wilson took a seat next to his hospital bed while his mother came around to the other side to grab his hand.

"I'm sure you already know about this, but acute lymphoblastic leukemia is luckily a very treatable disease. About 90% of kids with it have a five-year survival rate. And while that statistic drops for adults to about 70-85%, it's still very promising, especially since you're a strong young man."

Dream nodded. He did know all of this already.

"The problem is with relapses. Every time a patient relapses, it affects that survival rate. Best case scenario, you have B-cell ALL instead of T-cell, but we don't know for sure. I can't give you a statistic specific to you until we have all the details."

"Do you have a guess?" Dream felt oddly distant from his body. He barely registered his mother hugging him tightly.

"Generally, for childhood ALL relapses, the survival rate is around 50%."

And just like that, his world shattered to pieces.

## Notes:

Thank you for the amazing response to the first chapter, I was so overwhelmed! I think my current plan is to update Mondays and Fridays, but I am terrible at sticking to a schedule so don't anticipate anything lol.

Also, most of this is already written (I just have the two endings left to write), but if you guys have anything you'd like to see from this fic, always feel free to comment (especially fluff ideas, I focus too much on the sad stuff lol). I can't and won't promise anything, but I'm always open to making changes/additions. I do have a small collection of deleted scenes already, so who knows, maybe I'll make a little one-shot collection sequel fic :)

## Chapter 3

## Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Chapter Text

I shake everything off me

Lymphoma can't hold me back

It can knock me down but I'm gonna be back

He doesn't want to tell Sapnap and George about his survival rate, and he doesn't have to. Because they Googled it.

Dream specifically told George and Sapnap not to go digging into his diagnosis online because it would only stress them out more. Even then, he knew they were going to do it anyway. There was no avoiding it.

The problem was that they assumed he didn't know about it.

It started subtly. Sapnap visited him almost every day in the hospital, and George called just as often. Dream avoided calling anyone else out of fear of them overhearing a machine or one of the nurses come in, but he would message them on Discord. After a couple of days of being full-time in the hospital, Dream noticed Sapnap got more clingy physically while also talking to Dream less and less. Anytime Dream brought up his treatment, how he was feeling, Sapnap immediately clammed up. George, on the other hand, would just keep talking about everything and anything not correlated with his cancer. His was more obvious than Sapnap's, but Dream let it slide. Everyone had their own coping mechanisms.

He began to realize the exact reason for their behaviors about a week into starting his treatment. Dream was talking about his experience with Make-A-Wish when he was eleven. Sapnap teased him for choosing to meet Rick Riordan and 'become a demigod' for a day.

"You literally could've met John Cena — and you chose to meet an author."



"Hey, it was actually the best day. He was super awesome and I still have my official son of Poseidon trident in my closet back home."

"You do not," George cackled, and Dream beamed. It was nice to laugh. Today had started as a pretty bad day; he felt super tired and he threw up three times before Sapnap arrived.

"Do too. You know, I almost didn't get a wish."

"Really?"

"Yeah. They do that a lot with kids with ALL since it's not as 'life-threatening' — which is such bullshit, it's fucking cancer. But then I started dropping when I was eleven so my doctor got me made a priority."

Dream snickered; he ended up being fine and he got to meet his favorite author. It worked out great.

Sapnap and George were not laughing.

And from there, it clicked. They knew about his prognosis, and they didn't want to be the ones to tell him.

He wasn't sure how to address it. He already knew how low his chances were; he cried over it almost every night for the past week. But how did he tell his friends he already knew? Especially because he could already predict how painful it would be after, when they had to face the reality that the chances of him living or dying were a coin flip.

Dream laid in his hospital bed, hardly awake and listening to Sapnap and George as they talked. He finally got his PICC line put in today, which meant infusions would be a lot easier now, but he was exhausted now. Having a

catheter inserted through your arm to your chest wasn't the most comfortable thing. While he dozed, he caught pieces of his friend's conversation.

"I'm just so stressed. The travel ban is rumored to lift any day now, but what if I can't get my visa in time?"

"You will, George. Don't worry about it."

"But we don't know that. I mean, fucking 50%? Have you heard anything on time or—"

"No. No one talks about it. Maybe they don't want him to know?"

"I know."

He watched, his mind so groggy, as Sapnap flinched. His eyes darted to Dream.

"You...You're awake?"

Dream ignored the question. "I know what the statistics are, Sapnap. They told me my first day here."

"Why didn't you say anything?" George asked. Dream shrugged.

"I didn't know how to, and then I realized you already knew the other day."

Sapnap gulped. He wouldn't meet Dream's eye. "Do...Do you know how long?"

Dream shook his head. "No. They won't really have much of an answer until they do another bone marrow biopsy in a month — if everything is going right, I'll technically be back in remission, though I'll still have a lot of treatment ahead of me. If not..."

He didn't want to think about what would happen otherwise.

There was a large crash on the phone. "FUCK!"

And it's clear his friends didn't want to either.

"George?" asked Sapnap. There was a clatter that sounded like a chair falling.

"I HATE THIS!"

Sapnap and Dream stayed quiet while George raged on the other side. Dream was honestly wondering when George would snap; he assumed it already happened when they weren't on call. He found Sapnap in the aftermaths of a similar fit the night he told him. Once Sapnap had cried everything he could, Dream dragged him away from the mess and turned on some random comedy on Netflix that could numb both of their minds. He couldn't do that with George, though.

"George. George, please, listen to me," he pleaded. The clambering quieted down, and he could hear how heavy George was breathing. "Take a deep breath, okay. It's okay. I'm still here. I'm not going anywhere."

He heard George's breath stutter as he did as Dream said. He carefully sat up so he could take the phone from Sapnap's shaking hand. Silent tears streamed down the youngest's face, and Dream's heart clenched. This was exactly why he didn't want them to know. He didn't want to put them through this, make them suffer so much.

"This isn't fair. This isn't fucking fair," George gasped. Sapnap choked on a sob. Dream felt his throat close up; he's already cried to much, but the chemo fucked with him so much, he couldn't hold it back anymore. He pulled at his hair — his hair that was probably going to fall out in a few weeks.

"I already did this," he croaked. "I already survived, and now I have to do it again, and everything is so much worse."

"Shit," Sapnap breathed, his whole body trembling.

"What do I tell everyone now? How can I tell them? I can't just drop that I might die, but if I don't, then what? We announce it after I'm already dead? Fuck that. Fuck this."

He hated everything. He was supposed to be done. He was recovered. His therapist always encouraged him to focus on the now instead of the past, but his present was even worse than the past and his future was fucked and everything was going wrong.

Sobs wracked his body, making it hard to breathe. His chest screamed with every inhale, and his arm was so sore, and his head hurt, and his body ached, and everything sucked. He just wanted it to be over, but he didn't want to die.

Strong arms enveloped him and held him close. Dream went limp in the hold, his head sagging against his pillow.

"I'm so tired," he said, his voice barely above a whisper.

"I know, Dream," Sapnap croaked.

"I don't want to die."

"I know. I know." Sapnap pulled back. His face was blotchy and swollen. "Get some rest. You need it."

"We'll be here when you wake up," George promised.

Dream closed his eyes and fell asleep.

---

Making friends wasn't easy as the cancer kid. School was difficult between hospitalizations and appointments, so he was home-schooled his first year in treatment. Keeping old friends was a challenge, meeting people was near impossible. All people saw was his sickly appearance. They struggled to see the child underneath.

Sometimes, Dream did too.

By the time he started to recover, his friends were limited to his siblings and a few acquaintances from before that he barely got to see. He was lonely and tired of being judged for his illness.

So he turned to the internet.

His first friends after were all people he met online. It's how he met Sapnap. At the time, he was so excited to have someone who didn't know anything about his past, who didn't need to know about that. Someone who was his friend not because they pitied the cancer kid, but because they wanted to be friends with him. As time went on, he found himself preferring online friends. Too many people from school knew his past. With people like Sapnap or George or Bad or Tommy, he never needed to worry.

There were times where he debated telling them; debated sharing that part of his past. But he couldn't bring himself to do it. He didn't want them to know. He didn't want to be that person to them. Cancer Kid Clay was in the past.

But not anymore. He can't hide it anymore. It's not his past anymore.

It's his present. And worst of all, it could be his end.

---

A week and a half into his treatment, Dream met the boy down the hall.

He was taking one of his daily walks through the halls because laying in his bed all day was the last thing his ADHD wanted to do. It was boring and repetitive, but at least he was getting some exercise.

And then one day, he heard his name. Except it wasn't his real name that all the nurses called him.

"-and then Dream crafted a boat mid-air and used it right before he hit the ground so he didn't die-"

"The boat kept him from dying? How does that work?"

"I already explained it. It keeps you from taking damage."

"Oh, of course."

"But do you know how good your reaction time has to be to do that? He's so crazy. Dream is, like, the best Minecraft player in the world."

"He certainly sounds like it."

"I wish I could meet him."

"Why can't you? You still haven't picked your wish, right?"

He could hear the kid's excitement drop. "He doesn't show his face to anyone. Can't really meet him without seeing his face."

"You don't think he'll make an exception? It wouldn't hurt to ask."

"But I don't want to make him show his face! That's mean!"

"Oh, Dameon."

Dream's feet dragged him to the door. He could see a small black child sitting in the hospital bed, a Minecraft blanket on his bed, and a diamond sword in his hand. A nurse was changing out his IV while a laptop on the bed played his 1 vs 5 manhunt video. The kid was so small. He remembered the nurse saying last week that he was almost eleven, but he looked even younger. That's what cancer does to you, though. He saw it in his own pictures from back then.

"Do you think I could become a streamer like Dream one day?" Dameon asked. His bald head was covered by a BadBoyHalo beanie.

The nurse froze. She turned to the small boy, whose eyes were glued to the video. "Of course, Dameon. You'll be even better, I'm sure."

Dameon giggled. "Dream has over 20 million subscribers. I don't think I could get that much."

Dream couldn't take it anymore. He turned away, running back to his room.

---

**Tommy**

Hey Big Man, just wanted to check in and make sure you haven't died yet

**Dream**

hi tommy. I'm not dead

**Tommy**

Real shame, keep it up

**Bad**

Are you feeling better today?

**Dream**

much better than yesterday

**Bad**

Yay!(ノ◡ノ)ノ\*:・° ☆ Sending you all the love!

**Dream**

love you too bad!

**Karl**

hey Jimmy wants to know if there's anything he can do to help

he asked if you wanted a tesla to make you feel better

**Dream**

I'm okay, please do not send me a tesla

tell Jimmy I said thank you and that I'm doing better!

---

After two and a half weeks straight in the hospital, Dr. Brett sent him home.

The moment he got home, he immediately collapsed in his bed — partially because he missed it so much, but because he was so fucking tired.



"Do you want food? Or do you just want to nap for now?" Sapnap nodded.

"I think I'll just nap. I'll eat later."

"Okay. George and I are streaming Among Us with Corpse and all of them. If you need anything, just text me."

When he woke up, it was dark. He forced himself up and tumbled out of bed, excited for something that wasn't hospital food. There wasn't much to eat — Sapnap spent so much time at the hospital with him, he only came home to sleep and stream. He found some leftover takeout that didn't look too old and heated it up. When he finished eating, he walked past Sapnap's room. He could hear him talking to chat. The door was unlocked, so Dream slipped inside.

Sapnap was doing card swipe. Dream shuffled over to the bed, and Sapnap froze, looking over his shoulder. Dream smiled and settled into Sapnap's fluffy pillows contently, adjusting his arm so it didn't pull on his PICC line.

Sykkuno reported a body, and Sapnap returned his attention back to the game. The round finished with the imposters, Brooke and Lily, winning. He couldn't hear what anyone else was saying, so he focused on playing a game on his phone.

"Dream? He's good."

He flinched and looked back at Sapnap. They were standing in the lobby, just chatting before starting the game again.

"Yeah, he's way better now. I'm not sure when he's planning to come back but—" Dream got off the bed and walked to the desk, making Sapnap hesitate. Dream leaned toward the mic.

"I'm actually deceased, don't let him fool you."

He could faintly hear the shouting through Sapnap's headphones and he gestured for him to pass it over. Sapnap rolled his eyes and handed him the headphones.

"Okay, I can hear you now."

"Dream! It's so good to hear you!" Valkyrae greeted.

"My chat is absolutely losing it right now," Corpse chuckled. Sapnap's chat was absolutely flying by as well, everyone spamming his name.

Dream laughed. "I haven't missed too much, have I?"

He chatted with everyone for a while before giving the headphones back to Sapnap. Since he just made his impromptu comeback, he knew he should announce it more formally. He opened up Twitter.

**Dream** @Dream

I survived

He posted and watched the notifications fly in. He laughed, a giddiness he hasn't felt in a while returning.

It was good to be back.

---

He woke up the next morning to his phone blowing up, and it wasn't over his comeback.

**George**

HAVE YOU SEEN IT

DREAM

DREAM WAKE UP

[\[link\] US, UK and Others Announce End of Travel Ban for Select Nations](#)

I applied for my visa this morning

Why does it have to take so long to process??

Wake uppppppppp

**Dream**

holy shit

**George**

!!!

**Dream**

when are you coming?

**George**

It said it could take 3-5 weeks to process so I booked a flight in five weeks

It was longer than Dream would have liked, but it made sense. George wasn't coming for a casual visit; he was hopefully going to move here for a few years.

**George**

The fans are freaking out

Everyone's asking when the meetup is

**Dream**

lol of course they are

sbit

SHIT

**George**

What????

**Dream**

what are we going to tell them??

we said we would do my face reveal after we met

**George**

oh

OH

We can just

Not address it?

I mean you did say you wanted to do it at an event and it'll be a while before  
we have one of those I think

**Dream**

that's true

I can't believe you're finally coming

I can finally assert how tall I am

## **George**

abSOLUTELY NOT

Excitement beat out how tired his bones felt. He jumped out of bed, slamming his hand on Sapnap's door until his friend finally opened it.

"Dude, what?"

"Have you talked to George yet?"

Sapnap grinned. "Oh, yeah! I was on the phone all morning when he was trying to figure it out."

Dream's smile fell. "Why didn't you wake me up?"

"Well, you were sleeping...I didn't want to wake you up. I know how tired chemo makes you."

Great, now Dream felt shitty for making Sapnap feel bad. "Right, thanks man. I can't believe he's finally coming."

Twitter was freaking out, as expected. People were still processing that he was back from break when this news hit. All of his friends were hyping it up too. The UK streamers were arguing with the US streamers over who was going to fly to visit who. It turned into a whole Twitter debate. Dream, of course, already knew that George was arranging to come to them, but he decided to tease the fans by posting a screenshot of him looking up flights to London on his alt.

The debate was settled, however, when Mr. Beast himself posted.

**MrBeast** @MrBeast

If this tweet gets a million likes in 24 hours I will host a live meetup and convention for the Minecraft YouTubers and streamers

And while Dream would've thought such a request was outrageous, the tweet already had 500k likes in less than an hour. He knew his fans were insane, but still...

And the comments were even worse.

**Tommyinnit** @tommyinnit

Replying to @MrBeast

LETS GOOOOOOOOOO

**Tubbo** @TubboLive

Replying to @MrBeast

EVERYONE LIKE THIS NOW

**Jack Manifold** @JackManifoldTV

Replying to @MrBeast

absolute legend here making the impossible happen

**Ranboo** @Ranboosaysstuff

Replying to @MrBeast

I'm absolutely losing it, everyone like this tweet please

**SNIFFERISH** @snifferish

Replying to @MrBeast

What kind of MCYT are we talking here???

**BadBoyHalo** @BadBoyHalo

Replying to @MrBeast

**@Skeppy** I guess we can meet now

**Skeppy** @Skeppy

Replying to @MrBeast and @BadBoyHalo

YOU'RE JOKING

Okay, those comments weren't bad. But it seemed the fans had not forgotten his comment to reveal his face during an event either. What better place to do it than a meetup hosted by MrBeast himself?

He could feel the stress building up. It was probable that, if the event did happen, it wouldn't be for several months. If he was lucky, maybe not for a year. He would be better by then (assuming he survived). Chemotherapy would be over and his hair would have time to grow back.

He gripped at his hair to relieve the stress. When he pulled his hand back out, a clump of strands came with it.

---

When he went to bed that night, he made plans to stream Bedwars with Punz and Bad. When he woke up that morning, he threw up three times, almost collapsed in the kitchen (Sapnap nearly had a heart attack), and the most painful sore in his mouth. He looked like shit, he felt like shit, and the last thing

he wanted to do was stream. But he had to, he owed it to his friends and his fans. So, with his stomach still churning despite the complete lack of food he ate today, he sat down at his desk and booted up his setup.

The moment he started the stream, his viewer count rocketed. He laughed and tried to sound as normal as possible.

"It's been a while since we've done this. I hope everyone's been alright. Being sick is the absolute worst, I swear."

He got a lot of donos that stream. Most people were just saying how happy they were to see him, others were asking how sick he was. But by far, the most donos and chat comments were about MrBeast's event. He met the like count early that morning, and it was all anyone could talk about online. Even Punz and Bad kept bringing it up.

"How big do you think it will have to be? Like will he rent out a whole event center?" Bad wondered

"Knowing MrBeast, he'll probably have one built just for this," joked Punz.

"I think it will be a lot of fun. Obviously, I hope it works out and can be done safely, especially with COVID and all. What do you think, Dream?"

"Huh?" His eyes refocused back on the computer. His friends laughed.

"Dude, you've been so out of it all stream. What's up?" Punz asked.

He could hear Bad get worried. "You're not still sick, are you?"

Yes. "No. I just couldn't sleep much last night. I was too excited."

"Aww, are you excited to see George? You muffin, you need to get your sleep."



"Of course I'm excited to see George," Dream brushed it off. "We've been talking about this for-"

A wave of nausea smacked Dream in the face like a baseball bat. The lights from his setup swirled and made the pounding behind his eyes hurt even worse. His very empty stomach constricted and lurched; at this point, it felt like he was going to start vomiting his organs.

"-eam? Dream? Are you okay?"

"I'm fine," he said, though it was so slurred it was obvious he was lying. He blindly searched for the mute button and, without knowing his success, dropped to the trash can below his desk and wretched. It was just straight dry heaving and pain and he just wished it would stop.

The headphones were still on. Through the grogginess, he could hear Punz and Bad talking.

"-muted himself, so I'm not sure-"

Oh thank God, he was able to mute himself before throwing up. It's the small wins in life that count.

"-maybe call Sap-"

Dream snapped out of this fit and fought nausea the best he could. He pulled himself back in his chair and squinted at the lights as he turned on his mic again.

"I'm good, I'm good. No need to worry." His voice sounded exhausted, but it wasn't too noticeable. He hoped.

"You sure? What was that?" Bad asked.

“Nothing.” He didn’t elaborate more than that.

He ended stream early after that. He didn’t feel too bad about it. If he learned one thing today, it was to never stream on a bad day. He got lucky he didn’t pass out on stream or something disastrous like that.

---

**Fae** @dreamteam643

Ok but is it just me or does it sound like Dream is still sick? Like he was so tired on stream last night and then there was that moment where I SWEAR he fainted or something. Idk I’m just really worried

**dont come for me** @justdsmpstuffff

Replying to @dreamteam643

This!!! He said he got mono but he was out for almost three weeks? Mono doesn’t last that long. I def think he’s sick but I’m worried it’s something worse

---

Dream should’ve known that lying to his friends was a bad idea.

**Bad**

I just wanted to check on you. You sounded a little down on stream. I was wondering if you were still sick? If so, have you gone to the hospital yet?

I’m just worried about you!!

Dream stared at the message for a long time, contemplating a reply — maybe ‘don’t worry, I’ve already been’ or ‘I’m not sick, that was something else’ — but

all of them just made him feel guilty. He didn't want to keep lying and lying and digging himself deeper into this hole. It was only going to get harder and harder to hide the truth, and while people may be concerned for his health for now, it won't stay that way. Soon they'll start to think that he's neglecting his health on purpose, or that he's shutting them out. The fans will get suspicious; they probably already were, knowing them. He can imagine all the clips of his stream going around, edited to sad music.

But maybe the reason he didn't want to keep lying was that he wasn't sure how much longer he had left. He didn't want to die not telling the truth.

He ran his fingers through his hair, mindlessly discarding the fallen strands in the trash can. His hair was falling out a lot slower this time, and that was probably the only reason he hasn't shaved his head yet. In a warped delusion, he hoped that it wouldn't fall out at all.

"Dream?" Sapnap knocked on the door. "I made a smoothie if you want some."

"Yeah, thanks, dude." His best friend came in and handed him the cup.

"How are you feeling? Is it another bad day or..."

Sapnap was keeping track of how many bad days he had to tell Dr. Brett. He didn't have to, but he thought it could help give the doctors a picture of how Dream was responding to the treatment.

"No, I don't think so. I'm just...stressed."

"About what?" Sapnap took a seat at his desk, and Dream shuffled to sit upright in his bed.

"Everything. Chemo. The fans. Our friends. The meetup." Sapnap nodded, encouraging Dream to continue. "I just...at first, I didn't want anyone to know. I

didn't want anyone to know I was a cancer kid, and when I realized I relapsed, I didn't want anyone to know about that either. But after learning my prognosis — I mean, my best odds are 50%! That's a coin flip! It feels wrong lying all the time and telling them I'm okay when I'm literally dying."

"So you want to tell the fans?"

Dream shuffled. "Maybe not them yet. But the others- they deserve to know."

Sapnap nodded. "They could probably help too. If they notice you're feeling down on stream, they can help distract the fans. They can also message me to come if you need help."

"Yeah. Now I just got to tell them. I hate this fucking part, I'm so bad at it."

Dream rubbed his face, and Sapnap laughed.

"You're just too dramatic about it. You've got to just tell them what it is with all the facts."

"Do you think I could pay Dr. Brett to just call a bunch of slightly famous streamers and tell them for me?"

"Probably not," Sapnap giggled. "You should start by telling Bad or someone else you're really close with. Maybe practicing it will make it easier for when you tell more people."

Dream nodded. It was a good idea. He pulled up Bad's message again.

**Dream**

can you call later actually?

---

"Hi, Dream. Is everything okay?"

He was alone again. Sapnap left the room to give him more privacy (Dream had a feeling he didn't want to experience having the news broken to him again).

"Hey, Bad. I, uh...that's actually why I'm calling." Dream worried his bottom lip. "You're somewhere safe, right? Like you're not driving or anything?"

"I'm just in my room. I'm sitting down too..."

"Okay. That's good. Is Rat with you?" Animals were good emotional supports. He had Patches with him right now, the cat resting on his lap.

"Uh, no? I can call her though?"

"Yeah, you should do that."

"Okay, Dream..." Bad whistled and patted his leg. Dream could hear the rattling of Rat's collar as the dog came running in. "I got her. Is everything okay?"

"Uh, no." Dream chuckled. He resisted the urge to touch his hair, knowing it would only pull it out. "You know how I said I got mono?"

"Yeah?"

"It wasn't mono. I lied. I didn't want anyone to know at the time, but...I got diagnosed with leukemia relapse."

There was a long silence as Bad processed it. Dream ran his fingers through Patches' fur.

"Relapse?" Bad said carefully.

"Yeah. I had acute lymphoblastic leukemia when I was a kid. I've been in remission for eight years. Well. I was."

"Ok. Ok. You have cancer. You have cancer- again. Ok."

It was clear he was processing. Sapnap said to just give all the facts, so he continued on. "I started treatment three weeks ago. I'm on chemo for now, and I have a PICC line. I'm home currently, but they kept me in the hospital for a bit, and I could go back at any time. Typically, the prognosis for a young person with leukemia is really good, but since I'm a relapse patient...It's not good."

Bad gasped, sharp and painful. "Are...Are you going to die?"

Dream bit his lip and hugged Patches close. "The doctors guessed at best I have a 50% chance."

"Dream...Clay...Oh my god, I'm so sorry. I...I don't even..."

Bad sniffled, and Dream felt his chest tighten. "Did- Did you know you were one of my first friends after I went into remission? You and Sap. I was thirteen."

Bad's breath hitched. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Can- Can I have a minute? I'll call you back, I just need to-"

Dream smiled. He wasn't surprised; he knew Bad, knew that despite being such a kind and sensitive guy, he didn't like showing emotion in front of other people.

"Of course, Bad. Take your time. I, uh... I can send you some good articles to read, if you want. I know Googling this stuff can get really scary."

"Yeah, that'd be good," Bad sniffled. "I'm so sorry this is happening to you, Dream."

After they hung up, Dream sent him links to the articles he had bookmarked. Well, that went...less dramatic than it did with Sapnap and George, he supposed. He definitely felt better about it, though hearing Bad get upset about it sucked. But there was no avoiding it, he supposed.

Now he just had to tell everyone else.

## Notes:

Honestly, the most inaccurate thing in here is probably the COVID restrictions and protocols lmao, but one can dream of a Dream Team meetup, amiright?

## Chapter 4

## Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Chapter Text

I'm bald headed and brave hearted, I'm small

But I'm a hundred feet tall, try to stop me

Biopsy after biopsy

Chemo, but I'm a king though

**Mom**

Good luck at your appointment today! Let me know how it goes!

Dream's leg bounced anxiously while the nurse administered the drugs into his PICC line. He was back for an infusion after getting to leave the hospital four days ago. In another week, he'd have to come back to get a bone marrow biopsy again to see if he was in temporary remission again or not.

His stomach was already churning from the anxiety of it all.

"Okay, darling. Now just take it easy and wait here. I'll be back in a bit to check your levels," the nurse instructed. Dream nodded and pulled out his laptop. This infusion was only supposed to be an hour-long this time, so he decided to distract himself by watching Tommy's latest video. He was alone in the room, so he didn't feel the need to get out his headphones.

That was his first mistake.

Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo were all shouting, and Dream wondered if it was too loud when his already cracked open door swung open.

"You watch Tommyinnit?!"

The little boy, Dameon, stood there. This time he had a Ranboo face mask and a lime green Dream beanie on, and Dream's heart stopped.

"He's so funny! My mom says I shouldn't watch him because he says so many bad words. She says he's a bad influence." The kid burst into his room, dragging his IV chart with him, and sat on Dream's bed without any invitation. "Who else do you watch? I really like Tubbo too, and Ranboo is so cool. Did you know he broke a record for most subscribers in a day?"

"I did," Dream said awkwardly, pitching down his voice. Dameon shot him a weird look but kept talking.



"Do you play Minecraft too? I have it on my iPad, but it's not the same. I mainly just build stuff."

"Building is still cool," Dream encouraged. Dameon shrugged.

"Yeah, I guess." He looked back at the screen. "Oh, is this Tommy's new video? I watched it last night, it's really funny."

Dream nodded. He tried to think of a nice way to get the kid to leave. He didn't want to be rude, but being so close to someone who was clearly a superfan — he was wearing his merch, for crying out loud — was stressing him out. But before he could do anything, the kid yawned and scooted back so he was leaning up against Dream's side. The streamer froze.

"Uh...where are your parents?" he settled on. What if his mom came in and thought he was some creep?

"They're both at work. I have three siblings and it's been hard for them. We can only have two visitors with COVID, so they can't bring everyone to see me."

"You haven't been able to see your siblings?" Dream asked, horrified. He couldn't imagine it; when he was going through leukemia as a kid, his siblings were his rocks. His oldest sister even let him shave her head so they could match.

"No. I haven't seen them since Christmas; we found out I was sick after that."

Dream felt the overwhelming urge to hug the kid, but he didn't because he was still a stranger.

"I was sick when I was your age too," Dream confessed. Dameon looked away from the video to stare at him.

"Really? Have you been sick that long?"

"No, no. I got better for a while, but now I'm back."

"Oh," Dameon's face fell. "I'm sorry."

"It's okay. I'll just get better again."

Dameon stared at his hands. "They say I'm not going to get better."

A lump settled in Dream's throat. "They do?"

Dameon nodded. "No one will tell me, but I hear Momma and the doctor whispering sometimes. They say I have an immune- immunity deficy disorder."

Ah, so that explained it. ALL in kids was likely to cure if the child was already healthy before they got cancer. The others...they typically made up that remaining 10%.

"Well, I've been told it's not looking too good for me either," Dream said, but then realized he was talking to a child. He should probably be more optimistic. "But I'm not going to let that stop me. I'm gonna get better, I swear it."

Dameon stared with wide, starry eyes, and Dream grinned back. He couldn't do anything to help the kid's health, but he could at least help his spirit.

"You sound a lot like Dream."

Dream choked on his own spit, and he coughed into his mask, which felt disgusting. "No- No I don't! You watch too much YouTube, kid."

"I guess," the kid shrugged and turned back to the computer, settling into Dream's side. "I'm Dameon, by the way."

Dream hesitated; would it be too hopeful for the kid not to know his real name?

"Uh, I'm, uh--"

"How are you doing, Clay- Dameon! What did we say about bothering other patients? You're breaking our COVID guidelines."

"Uh, I'm fully vaccinated, if that helps," Dream said awkwardly. The nurse gave him a blank stare that told him it didn't.

"But Ms. Holly! He watches Minecraft videos too! Please, can I stay here? It's so boring in my room!"

The nurse leveled them both with a hard stare. Dream tried really hard not to fidget while Dameon gave his best pout and puppy eyes.

Ms. Holly sighed. "Fine. But keep your masks on the whole time, got it? Just because the government is lifting restrictions doesn't mean I am."

Dameon cheered and whooped, making Dream laugh. As nervous as he was, he was glad he could at least be there for the kid, especially when the pandemic was making it so hard for him. He leaned back in the bed, shuffling over so Dameon could have more room.

"Have you seen SAD-ist's animations before?" he asked. Dameon gasped excitedly.

"Yes! I watch them every single day! They're the best videos in the world. I wish she could animate the whole thing into a TV show on Netflix. It would be the greatest show in the whole world."

When his infusion finished and he was allowed to leave, Dameon's face dropped so much that Dream felt his entire heart shattered. He worried his bottom lip; he told Sapnap and George that he'd be back to stream tonight, but they probably wouldn't care too much if he pushed that time back a bit.

"What if I stay here until your mom gets off work? You said she comes to visit you after, right?"

Dameon nodded excitedly. "Yeah! She'll want to meet my new friend!"

Befriending children. Who was he, Philza?

---

"Yo, did you see what MrBeast just posted?"

"What, no? Where? On Twitter?"

Dream and Sapnap were on call with George. None of them were streaming. At first, George called to talk about sleeping arrangements for when he came, but then he just stayed on call. Dream was on the couch, his arm propped up in a useless attempt to make his PICC more comfortable. He had a beanie on to hide his thinning hair.

"Yeah. He just announced a potential date and location for the MCYT meetup," George explained.

"Nuh-uh," Dream said, reaching for his phone. "It's only been like, what, a week since he sent out that tweet?"

"Two weeks," Sapnap corrected. "Still, this is insane, even for him."

That was an understatement. He knew there was a lot of hype about it — it was all the fans talked about on any of their streams — but even this was impressive for Jimmy. He pulled up Twitter and found the tweet at the top of his timeline.

**MrBeast** @MrBeast

We are still super early into planning it, but we're currently looking to host MrBeast's StreamerCon late 2021 in the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. It'll be multiple days long. We are opening it up to all streamers, so comment who you want to see there!

Dream frowned. It was June, which meant they were trying to make this happen in less than six months. And the problem was, knowing MrBeast, he was going to succeed.

"That's too soon," Dream muttered.

"Huh?" George hummed, sounding distracted. He was probably reading all the comments.

"I need more time. I'm going to be on chemo until September or October. I-I can't go that soon."

"Dream," Sapnap reached his hand to touch his shoulder. "Didn't you say you were planning to tell the fans soon? They'll already know."

"Yeah, but they'll probably be expecting to see normal me. You know how they are, Sap. They draw me like I'm a goddamn supermodel sometimes. I wouldn't be surprised if some of them refuse to believe I actually lost my hair to chemo. They already have unrealistic expectations for what I look like — and now I look like a walking corpse!"

"Hey, maybe they'll like that. Just look at CorpseHusband." Dream glared, and Sapnap rubbed the back of his neck sheepishly. "Bad joke. Sorry."

"#dreamfacereveal is already trending," George said, and Dream groaned. "You could just say you're not going."

"Are you kidding? No, I can't. People will literally cancel me and the convention if I say I can't go, especially without a reason."

There was a pause. "Well...you can give them a reason."

Dream sighed. While it went well telling Bad a week ago, he hasn't brought himself to talk to anyone else about it. He hasn't streamed himself since that day either; thankfully, he never streamed much in the first place, so it wasn't that weird. However, he was appearing less and less in other people's streams, which made the fans and his friends anxious. He hasn't made a Twitter post addressing it or anything.

"Not yet. I will," he assured firmly. "I just...need a bit more time."

Sapnap's face twisted like he had more he wanted to say — like pointing out that 'time' wasn't something Dream was guaranteed. Instead, he shook his head and patted Dream's arm.

"Of course, dude. Just know we're here for you."

"I know," Dream sat up, wincing at how much the PICC stung. He could feel the headache building. "Ugh. Is it too late to bail on Tommy today?"

George hummed, concerned. "I'm sure he'll understand if you need to sit out—"

"No, no," Dream waved him off, standing up. He blinked the nausea away. "I'll be fine, don't worry about it. It's not a lore stream, so it shouldn't be that hard."

---

It was hard. It was so, so hard.

Don't get him wrong. He loved Tommy to bits. The kid was hilarious but also really smart and kind. He loved streaming with Tommy. But the problem was

that Tommy's whole gig was loud and chaotic, which Dream normally excelled in. Some of his best content was when he was filming with Tommy. But that was with no-cancer Dream. Cancer Dream? His head was about to explode.

They were using some chaotic mod with Wilbur. Tommy was cackling through his headphones, and Dream winced and turned down the volume.

"Dream, Dream, watch this! HA!" Tommy screeched, Wilbur cackling in the background. Dream forced himself to laugh. He hoped his acting was good enough. His stream hasn't said anything, so far, but that just might be because they were only spamming about MrBeast's convention.

"God, when we all meet for the convention, it's just going to be total chaos," Wilbur said. "Can you imagine the DreamSMP trying to do a panel together? It'd just be straight screaming."

"You're going to the convention?" Dream asked. He probably shouldn't have sounded so surprised.

"Of course, we're going to be there. Just because it's being held in America isn't going to stop us," said Tommy. "You're gonna be there, right? I want to see for myself just how much better looking I am than you."

That won't be hard.

'FACE REVEAL' was being spammed in his chat again. Dream sighed and shifted uncomfortably.

"Hmm, keep telling yourself that, Tommy."

"HEY!"

"You'll be there, right, Dream?"

"Uh, probably," Dream said and left it at that. He hoped they would get a clue and move on.

They went back to playing around with the mod. While Tommy and Wilbur had moved on, chat absolutely would not drop it. Dono after dono poured in, and Dream tried to answer them as vaguely as possible. His headache pounded worse than ever.

**Will you be revealing your face at the convention?**

"Maybe."

**if george goes will you go**

"I guess."

**Are you going to wear a mask at StreamerCon?**

"With COVID, we may all have to."

**Will you do a meet-and-greet? And if so, will it be with your face showing?**

"Uh, I'm not sure."

**Will the whole Dream Team be at StreamerCon?**

"I don't know."

**If you don't face reveal at StreamerCon, will you do it on your channel?**

"Look, guys, I'm just learning about all of this at the same time as you, so I don't have many answers yet. I appreciate the donos, but please stop asking."



He sounded a little irritable, sure, but he thought his request was fairly reasonable. Chat stopped spamming as much, so it seemed like they were listening. The rest of the stream went on normally, and he said goodbye to Wilbur and Tommy. While he was saying goodbye to chat, he got another dono.

**hi dream! i noticed you've been down since your break. are you still sick? you should go to the hospital if you are not getting better**

His heart stopped

It wasn't about StreamerCon, but in a way, it was way worse. His vision tunneled, his heart pounded. His fight or flight response triggered, and his mouth opened before his mind couldn't stop it.

"Okay. Can we not talk about a streamer's health unprompted, yeah? It's really none of your business. I get that you're concerned, but it's not something I need to talk to you about. I told you I'm fine and I don't need you sticking your noses in my ass every time I sound a little bit tired. Just fuck off already."

He realized his fuck up the moment he closed his mouth.

Oh shit. Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit.

Chat was flying by, but he couldn't even look at it. His heart was beating out of his chest.

"Sorry, I- thanks for coming to the stream."

He closed out immediately and backed away from his set up. His heart and head were pounding, and even though his chest was heaving with labored breaths, it felt like he was suffocating. He just yelled at a fan. He told his fans to fuck off just because they were worried about him. Of course they were worried about him; why wouldn't they be? He was acting weird on stream all the time, they

had every right to be concerned. God, he was going to be in such deep shit for this. The haters were going to have a field day. 'Dream tells fan to fuck off on stream' was going to be all over social media.

He grabbed at his hair, seeking that old comfort, and felt his fingers slip as he pulled out large chunks. He stared at the dirty-blond strands, and he could feel his mind disassociate. Everything is falling apart. I'm falling apart. The next thing he knew, he was in the bathroom. He grabbed Sapnap's hair clippers and stared at them. Was he really going to do this? After avoiding it for so long?

Right now, with everything going wrong — his cancer, the meetup, the nosy fans — it was just all out of his control. He wanted his control back.

He turned on the clippers.

Clumps buzzed off easily and tattered into the sink. The last time he did this, he had his whole family with him. His dad used the clippers while his mom and little brother held his hands. His older sister held the camera to video it for his mom. Drista just watched, too young to know what was going on.

Now, it was just him and his mental breakdown in a bathroom.

I'm a horrible person. Having cancer is no excuse to be an asshole. Everyone was going to be so pissed at me. They were probably canceling me right now. They had every right to cancel me, it's what I deserved. Maybe it'll be better if I was canceled. No one will want me to come to StreamerCon then, so I won't have to worry about a face reveal or looking sickly. Maybe this was for the best.

It looked absolutely horrible. Some parts were buzzed shorter than others, there was a chunk on the back that he couldn't reach. His bald spots were more obvious than ever, like hairless polka dots. Combined with his puffy red eyes — he looked so bad, it was hysterical.

Fuck, if only the fans could see him now. Who would want to stan the ugly dude dying from cancer that couldn't control himself enough to not yell at fans? Who had a mental breakdown every other day from either stress or pain or both? He was an embarrassment, that's what he was.

The door opened slowly. Sapnap stood at the door. Dream wondered if he would laugh — he should laugh, how could you not laugh at this? Instead, his friend looked sad, and it was honestly so much worse.

Stop it. Don't pity me.

"Want help with that?"

Sapnap held out his hand, looking at the clippers. His first instinct was to run out of the room and hide, but that wouldn't solve anything. Dream handed them over cautiously.

"Sit down, dude, you're too tall," Sapnap said. Dream put the toilet seat down and plopped on it, feeling absolutely exhausted. Sapnap changed out the guard size and calmly ran the clippers down Dream's head. Now feeling calmer, Dream realized how embarrassing his freakout was. His face flushed hot and he picked at his cuticles. He snapped on stream and then proceeded to shave his head. Could he be any more dramatic?

When Sapnap finished, he put the clippers down on the counter. Dream stared at the bald man in the mirror. He looked about 5% less ridiculous, which was better than nothing, he supposed.

"Do you want me to get a razor to finish it off or..."

"No," Dream shook his head. "It'll fall out soon enough."

Sapnap nodded. His eyes kept returning to the clippers. Dream quirked an eyebrow.

"Don't tell me you're planning to shave your head too."

Sapnap jumped, his face flushing, which was all the confirmation Dream needed. "Shut up! I just thought it would be like...you know, solidarity or something. To show my support."

Dream snorted. "You don't need to shave your head to do that. I already know you support me. You have to do it more than anyone else." Dream ran a hand over his head. It was still a little prickly from the light buzz that remained, but he knew it would be smooth in a couple of weeks. "I wonder if I could get Bad to shave his head again now."

"Probably..." Sapnap trailed off. There was a weird, contemplative look on his face that Dream did not like. It usually meant Sapnap was plotting something.

"How bad is Twitter?" he decided to ask to distract him.

"It's...It's definitely not good." Sapnap sighed. "I watched the clip. Honestly, in terms of internet freakouts, it's not even that bad. But..."

"But since I'm Dream and I can get called out for sighing too heavily, I'm canceled."

"Yeah, pretty much."

Dream groaned and pulled out his phone. He had dozens of messages from his friends, and a couple from his mom and siblings. Everyone was very concerned, and most of them were warning him to stay off social media. Bad and George sent the most, and given they knew, he knew it wasn't going to be pretty. He tapped on the Twitter app just as his phone was snatched out of his hands.

"Hey!"

"I really don't think that's a good idea. Not tonight."

"I want to know what they're saying."

"And I'm telling you that you don't."

"It can't be as bad as the other billion times I've been canceled. You're telling me this is worse than when people worked together to fake a video of me saying the N-word?"

Sapnap didn't answer, and Dream's stomach pooled with dread. Now he really needed to know.

He lunged for his phone, but Sapnap jerked away. He tried to use his superior height and lankiness to wrestle it away from his friend, but unfortunately, Sapnap was a strong dude. He could outwrestle Dream even when he wasn't on chemo. They tussled for barely a minute before Dream was panting and exhausted. He sat back down on the toilet.

"Can't you at least summarize what they're saying?" he pleaded. He stared at Sapnap with wide eyes. "I'm a dying man. You can't refuse a dying man."

"Dream, what the fuck."

"Please!"

"Fine. I'll read you the most popular ones — that aren't that bad," he amended. He pulled out his own phone and started scrolling. "Okay, so this one says: Dream stans will literally dedicate every waking hour to this man, so of course they're going to notice when he's sick and be worried about it. He's the one that encourages this behavior, yet this is how he treats them. #CancelDream."

"How many likes does it have?"

"20 thousand."

Dream winced. It's been less than an hour since he blew up and it's already gotten that much traction.

"Uh, this one says 'where was this energy when people were drawing NSFW art of Tommy' with a clip from the stream. It has 15 thousand likes. Another says 'people literally just want to know if Dream is okay and he fucking gaslights them for it. That is such bullshit and should not be tolerated #CancelDream #DreamMeltdown.' It has 17 thousand likes..."

"These are the ones that aren't that bad?" Dream said. Sapnap winced sympathetically.

"Yup."

"Oh. Shit."

A sick curiosity wanted to see what the rest were saying. It was a good thing Sapnap took his phone; he was really bad at dealing with these things, and he tended to be really snappy and bullheaded about it. He probably would be typing a multi-part Twitter rant right now.

"George and Bad both posted rants about it, and I think Puffy did too. I know Tommy, Ranboo, Karl, Philza, and Punz made posts, and there's probably a lot more now. Corpse made a really good post that's been getting a lot of support, but I'm not sure you'll like it."

"What? Why?"

"He basically talked about how hard it is when fans bother you about your health all the time and how it's been a struggle ever since he talked about his

chronic illnesses. He made a lot of really good points, but now a lot of people are speculating that you have some kind of chronic illness too."

Dream laughed humorlessly. "Well, that's rude. Mine is acute, not chronic."

"...I don't even know what to say to that."

"You could give me my phone back."

"No. Actually, I do know what to say. Go to bed."

"Who are you, my mom?"

"You have your bone marrow biopsy tomorrow, remember? If you don't go to bed, I will call your mom."

"Okay, okay. Let me clean up this hair first."

That night, he laid in bed. He stared at the ceiling, too restless to sleep, and his lack of phone was making it worse. Sappnap even stole Dream's mouse and keyboard so he couldn't use his setup. He kept thinking about how many people he let down today; how many fans he disappointed and dissociated. What if Dameon saw that clip and started hating Dream? Hating him? He wasn't sure he could take it.

He was already losing so much. He might lose his life. He can't lose his fans too.

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## **Trending**

1 . Trending

**#CancelDream**

Minecraft YouTuber is in hot water after snapping at a fan on stream

2 . Trending

**#DreamMeltdown**

3. Politics . Trending

**Mrs. Biden**

Fox News gets critiqued by CNN reporter after addressing the first lady as Mrs. Biden instead of Dr. Biden

4. Trending

**If Dream is sick**

Trending with **Dream stans**

**Mandy** @mandybaker49

PSA!!! You are not entitled to a streamer's personal life! It's clear he doesn't want to tell the fans about his health, and everyone should respect that. SMH, y'all canceling him, what if Dream is sick? Y'all gonna look like clowns for #CancelDream

**rawr** @FundyIsAFurry\_\_

Replying to @mandybaker49

streamers also aren't entitled to gaslighting and shaming fans for worrying for them. if dream is sick, he should address it like a grown adult



**Mandy** @mandybaker49

Replying to @FundyIsAFurry\_\_

You're literally proving my point. I have chronic health issues. I hate talking about it. I can't imagine being pressured and shamed by millions of people for struggling with my health

**rawr** @FundyIsAFurry\_\_

Replying to @mandybaker49

'i hate talking about it' posts about chronic illness in a twitter thread for everyone to see. just say you kiss dream's ass and move on

---

His mom and Sappnap wanted to come with him for his bone marrow biopsy, but Dream told them that he was fine going alone. In reality, his nerves were eating him up and he really didn't feel like being around people. His stress was still at an all-time high from last night, and it only got worse this morning when Sappnap finally gave him back his phone. He immediately opened up Twitter and just proceeded to wreck his already fragile mindset. That combined with the anxiety for his scan — scanxiety, as Dr. Wilson used to call it — and he was seconds from just losing it.

He didn't talk to anyone during the entire operation. He just gritted his teeth and bared it. When the procedure was over, Dr. Brett had him lay down until the anesthetics wore off.

"We should have the results within the week. Hopefully, it shows that your remission induction therapy was successful."

"Will it up my odds if it is?"

Dr. Brett paused. "Yes, I think it would a little bit."

Dream chuckled bitterly. "A little bit? So what, 51%?"

"You know any level of increase in regards to something like this is exponential, Clay."

She left, and Dream went back to his phone. He thought about finally addressing his behavior on Twitter — obviously, he wasn't going to tell them everything, but they deserved an apology at least. He always hated writing apologies; not because he wasn't sorry, but because sounding sincere through text was so hard, and even then, most people didn't buy it.

He thought back on what Sapnap had suggested. Tell the people close with him first, so it would get easier to tell more later. So many of his friends came to his defense last night even when they had no idea what was going on. He owed it to them to know the truth of what was going on with him.

But the question remained: how should he do it?

He thought about calling them like he did with Bad and George, but he decided against it. It would take way too much time and would be way too emotionally exhausting. Hearing your friends panic through the phone when there's nothing you could do about it was another form of hell. A message in the group chat seemed too impersonal. In the end, he decided to draft a pre-written message that he could just copy and paste to send it to each person individually. That way it wouldn't be so emotionally draining, but it would also open it up for his friends to ask questions and respond freely. It wasn't as good as telling them in person, but he wasn't sure he would get that opportunity. And if he did, it would be months from now. He couldn't leave them in the dark for that long. Not when they were doing so much for him.

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## Dream

hey, so I have something I've been needing to tell everyone. there's no easy way to explain this, but I'll do my best. when I was ten, I got diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). I went fully into remission when I was thirteen, and that's how I was until over a month ago when I started noticing symptoms again. I went back to the doctor and found out I relapsed. I've been going through chemo and it's been really hard on me physically and mentally, hence why my behavior has been so off. I told everyone I got mono because I wasn't sure if I wanted to share this, but I feel like it's only fair that I do keep you all informed. you do so much for me, and I want to repay that with honesty. I'm sorry if I worried any of you, and I'm especially sorry for my behavior on stream last night. it's been really hard lately but that's not an excuse.

I know you might be wondering more about my diagnosis and my prognosis. the links below are good resources, and you can ask me more questions :)

## Notes:

my friend got me to start playing genshin impact a week ago  
and now I'm AR 27 and fully addicted, also Ningguang  
supremacy

## Chapter 5

## Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Once these flowers smell too damn good to be living in the funk

So I finna get it in and I finna get a crunk and I finna get the living

On remission from the jump

The responses flooded in instantly. He sent the message to everyone in the SMP along with a few other streamers he considered his friends, like MrBeast. It was clear not a lot of people knew what to say (understandable, he basically dropped a bomb on them), but they all offered their support and love. It made his heart warm reading the messages.

### **Technoblade**

shit dream, i'm really sorry to hear that, thank you for telling me. if there is anything you need, don't be afraid to reach out. just take it easy and don't worry about the fans or streaming

fuck cancer

### **Awesamdude**

Holy shit!

I'm so so sorry Dream. Are treatments going well? Is there anything I can do? I can make another post for the fans if you want

### **Niki**

oh my god dream i cannot believe it

thank you for sharing, you are so brave

please take care of yourself. your health is what matters the most right now.  
there's no need to apologize

**Eret**

I'm glad you are feeling comfortable sharing something so vulnerable, I can't imagine how hard it's been. I'm wishing you the absolute best with your treatment. If you ever need to talk, I am here

Has your treatment been going well? The links said that you should be getting a bone marrow biopsy at one month. Do you know the results yet?

**Tommy**

WHAT THE FUCK

is leukemia terminal???

WAIT

FUCK

IGNORE ME THAT WAS SO SHITTY

i'm sorry i'm processing

fuck dream i'm so sorry

you dont deserve this

no one does but especially not you

please dont apologize, you did nothing wrong

FUCK CANCER

## **Quackity**

SHIT

SHIT SHIT SHIT SHIT SHIT

THATS BULLSHIT

how has your treatment been??? are you doing better???

## **MrBeast**

How can I help?

I can cancel the convention if it's only going to cause you problems. I don't want you to worry about it when you should be worrying about your fight

Dream started replying to all of the messages, answering any of their questions. Wilbur had the most, clearly having read through all of the articles. He was the only one Dream told about his low prognosis since he knew Wilbur would be looking into that. He didn't want to mislead him on that. He knew he should tell the others about it too, but he didn't know what would be the best way to do it. Announcing his low survival rate seemed a little too intense for a mass text.

"Clay!" his door burst open, and Dameon clambered inside, going straight for his bed. "Have you heard? MrBeast is hosting an event for streamers, and all of the Dream SMP is invited!"

Dream smirked, tucking his phone away so Dameon couldn't accidentally see a message. "I have heard. Apparently, everyone thinks Dream is going to do a face reveal at it."

"I know! I made it my wish!"

"That Dream would reveal his face?" He couldn't imagine Make-A-Wish taking that on.

"No! That I can go to StreamerCon! I wouldn't have to pick meeting one member of the Dream SMP because they'll all be there!"

Dameon's eyes crinkled, showing his smile behind his mask, and Dream's heart shattered. If he hadn't felt like shit for dodging his fan's questions earlier, he did now. He pulled up MrBeast's contact.

**Dream**

it's okay, don't cancel it. I still want to be there when I get better :)

---

The problem with so many people knowing now was that it was more likely for someone to let it slip. He didn't think any of his friends would do it purposely, but they were streamers. Their jobs had them live streaming constantly to massive audiences, and a side effect of that was saying things you didn't mean. Either your brain didn't process your words right or you forgot who you were talking with, it happened a lot. This meant the pressure was on to tell the fans first.

Fuck.

In the meantime, they all waited anxiously for his biopsy results. He got a lot of good news during the week of waiting. George's visa got approved for him to stay for three years, which meant he was good to move in about a week and a half.

"If you end up needing to stay longer, we can just get married," Dream joked. George kindly told him to fuck off.

He posted an apology to Twitter, vaguely explaining that things have been stressful and it's been affecting his health. He apologized for his behavior and promised to not let it happen again. There were plenty of people who were still mad, but a lot of people accepted the apology (except now the speculation that he was struggling with his mental health was at an all-time high. There was a rumor that his hiatus was because he went to a psych ward).

He was in the middle of filming a video with George when he got the call.

"Oh, shit, the doctor is calling. It's probably about my biopsy results."

"Well answer it!"

"I am!"

He slammed his thumb against the answer button and silently listened to Dr. Brett on the other end. He barely said a word. When she was done delivering the news, he hung up without saying goodbye.

"What'd she say?" George pressed. Dream stared at his Minecraft character.

"The induction therapy chemo wasn't enough to get me to remission. There is still leukemia in my bone marrow."

He could hear George slam his hands against his desk. "Goddamnit." His friend continued to curse. Dream wondered if he should react that way too. He just felt detached. Of course, it wouldn't be that easy.

"What happens now? Do you have to go on chemo longer?"

"No. They said it's enough leukemia that they wanted to take a different approach. I'm going to meet with her tomorrow to talk about what my options are."



"I'm so sorry, Dream."

"It's whatever." He shrugged. "To be honest, I think I already knew. They wouldn't give me that prognosis otherwise."

George groaned. "I wish I could just get out there already."

Dream cracked a smile. It was easier to tease George and be happy like nothing has changed than to focus on reality. "Awww, does Gogy want to see me? Does he want to give me a hug?"

"Oh my god, shut up."

Dream snickered, shoving George's Minecraft character. They fought back and forth until George screamed at him to stop because he was about to die. While George restored his health, Dream gnawed on his lip.

"I think I'm going to tell the fans after you get here."

George's character paused what he was doing. "...are you sure? That's just over a week away."

"Well, I'm not going to do it the moment you get here, obviously. But, you know, soon. It's just going to get harder to hide it, especially since a lot more people know. I don't want it getting exposed on accident."

"That makes sense, I guess." George paused before chuckling. "Is it because you want me to hold your hand while you do it?"

"I don't know, would you? Would you hold my hand, George?"

"I'm canceling my flight."

"George!"

---

"Your best options are CAR T-cell therapy or a bone marrow transplant. The pamphlets describe what those are in detail, and they also list other great resources. I want you to go home, read them over a couple of times, and really think about what you want to do. Talk it over with your parents. We do need to make a decision quickly, though. I'm talking as soon as tomorrow. Does that work for you?"

Dream stared at his pamphlet. He's probably read it over a hundred times now. Sappnap had a different one, and he kept switching between that and some website.

"Dude, I have no clue," Sappnap declared. "She didn't recommend one over the other?"

"Nope. She said there's no guarantee which one would be better for me, and that it's just my preference."

His mom recommended the bone marrow transplant just because CAR T-cell therapy was a newer treatment and that made her nervous. It looked like the therapy had good results, however, and BMT would require finding a donor that matched him. Plus, if he went with BMT, he would have to go through extensive chemo and radiation to prepare for it, while T-cell therapy didn't require that. It did, however, have high risks of an immuno response that could put him in the ICU, or, worst case, neurotoxicity.

"We should ask Wilbur or something. He's good at this research thing," Sappnap muttered, mostly to himself. Dream perked up.

"Should we?"

"Huh?"

"Should we call Wilbur? Ask what he can find."

"Oh. Uh...I mean, I was just joking, but if you're cool with him knowing...I mean, it couldn't hurt."

Dream pulled out his phone. He first sent a message to make sure Wilbur wasn't streaming, and when he confirmed he wasn't, Dream hit the call button. Wilbur picked up after the first ring.

"Hello?"

"Hey, Wilbur. You're on speaker with Sapnap."

"Hey," Sapnap greeted.

"Hi. What's up? Is this about a video or something?"

"No, no, not that. Actually, it's about my cancer?" Dream could hear Wilbur sit up. "We just got my scan back, and it wasn't very good. Normally, the goal after a month is to have me in remission, but there's still leukemia in my bone marrow."

"Shit, I- That's shit, Dream, I'm so sorry."

"It's okay. Now we're looking into alternate treatment plans. My doctor said I can decide between CAR T-cell therapy and bone marrow transplant. Sapnap and I have been looking into it, but we were wondering if you could find anything. You have a knack for research."

Wilbur laughed. "Should I be embarrassed to admit I've already read up on both of those treatments?"

Dream burst out laughing; in all honesty, he was entirely unsurprised. Just going off the sheer amount of questions and messages Wilbur has sent him over the past week, it made perfect sense.

"I think I read somewhere that you can still get a bone marrow transplant after T-cell therapy. I'm not sure if it's the other way around, so I would probably ask your doctor. That way you know if you have a backup plan."

"That's smart. Thank you, Wilbur."

"Of course," he could tell the man was grinning by the tone of his voice, but then Wilbur trailed off. "How are you doing, Dream? I mean, with the chemo not working enough and you being a relapsed patient, it can't..."

Dream frowned. "Yeah. I mean, I'm okay for now. Chemo sucks, obviously, but that's just the side effects. It hasn't gotten bad yet, at least. It's still manageable."

Though, based on last time, it'll probably just go downhill from here, he didn't say, because he didn't want to dump that on them. Sapnap and Wilbur probably already knew, anyway.

He called Dr. Brett, and she confirmed what Wilbur said. It also didn't go two ways — he could get CAR T-cell therapy and then get BMT, but he couldn't get the therapy after BMT. It was a risk, but so was any treatment, so he opted to do it and get the T-cell therapy. They were putting him on a maintenance chemotherapy plan to make sure the leukemia stayed at a manageable level. It wouldn't be until about August before they could extract the cell samples, and another two months before the procedure could happen. That put him on track for October. But the best news was what would happen after the procedures.

"Past patients started reporting feeling more back to normal within a month or two after the procedure if it puts them in remission," Dr. Brett explained. "Of

course, you will have to be monitored and checked often in case of another relapse, and be on a less intensive maintenance chemotherapy plan.”

Which meant, if all went well, he would be healthy enough for MrBeast’s StreamerCon. That was all he needed to hear.

---

Dream pulled the beanie as low as it would go without obscuring his vision. Sapnap sat next to him, leg also bouncing with nerves. They were waiting at passenger pickup. George’s plane had already landed and he was currently going through customs. Even before he relapsed, he always got anxious going out in public with Sapnap since fans knew his face. Now that he was on chemo and he looked like the poster cancer patient (bald head, sunken in cheeks from weight loss, bags under his eyes), it was a hundred times worse. That added with the fact that they were about to see George, who was even more recognizable, sent his anxiety through the roof.

Oh god, he was about to see George.

“He just got out of customs. He’s on his way over here,” Sapnap announced, looking up from his phone. Dream’s anxiety skyrocketed. “I told him what car we’re in, so hopefully he can find us.”

“I think I’m gonna be sick,” Dream muttered. Sapnap’s leg stopped bouncing.

“Uh...like actually, chemo is about to make me barf or...?”

“No, no, not that. More like, I am so anxious I’m about to fucking lose it.”

“Right, just making sure.”

Dream eyed the crowd, looking for a familiar face. He kept his eyes locked on the main doors so he'll see George the moment he walked out. Sapnap's phone rang, and Dream rushed to pick it up first.

"Are you here?" he asked, and George laughed.

"Hi, Dream. I'm walking out now. Do you guys see me?"

Dream looked back at the door and locked on George. He wore all black, even his mask, and he lugged two huge suitcases with him. His brain felt like it glitched; George was real, and he was here. That was so weird. Dream was about to slam open the door so he could tackle George with a hug, but Sapnap grabbed his arm and held him back. He turned to his best friend, confused, and Sapnap pointed to something off to the side. It was two girls, clearly panicking and pointing at George. One had their phone out.

Fans.

"You need to up your disguise, Gogy," Dream said, sinking low into the front seat.

"What? Shit." George ducked his head and started walking faster. "Well, this puts a damper on our meeting. What should I do? I don't want them to see your car."

"I'm going to drive to the parking garage. Meet us there?" Sapnap said. He walked George nod, looking over his shoulder for any other fans.

"Yeah. I'll put on a hat this time."

"Is it black too? You'll really look like an e-boy then," Dream teased as Sapnap pulled away.

They pulled into the parking garage, parking the car in a far corner on a random high floor with the least amount of cars. George stayed on the phone the whole time, giving them updates on his location.

"Why'd you have to park so far away from the elevator? I should've just walked to your house at this point."

"That can still be an option if you're going to be that way," Sapnap threatened, and George whined. Dream looked in the rearview mirror and saw George approaching again. This time, he didn't hesitate to run out of the car.

"George!"

The shorter man froze, almost dropping his phone. "Dream?"

Dream charged forward, slamming into George and squeezing him for dear life. He's been waiting for this moment for years, and it was going to be the best damn hug ever. George laughed and steadied them before they tipped over. He squeezed back just as hard. Dream's hand started shaking; whether it was exhaustion or pent-up emotions, he couldn't tell. He could barely process that this was real. When George pulled back, he rubbed against the sleeve covering Dream's PICC line, making him hiss in pain.

"Oh, shit, I'm sorry." The panic was written all over George's face, and Dream waved it off.

"Don't worry, it happens all the time."

George nodded and studied Dream's face instead. His eyes narrowed. "You look fine. Even bald, you're still a handsome bastard."

Dream wheezed. It felt like a layer of anxiety was dispelled from his body. "You- You haven't even seen my head though!"

"Well, I'm sure it's fine."

Sapnap came over, giving George a huge bear hug. "About time you made it here, Gogy."

Dream grinned and couldn't resist jumping in on the reunion hug. He used his superior height to envelope both of his friends. The Dream Team, finally together. For once, something was going right.

They helped George get his suitcases in the car before piling in. Dream offered to take the back row. "I'm feeling a little tired. I think I might lay down."

Sapnap nodded, used to this already. George looked a lot more thrown off. "Oh, okay. If you want..."

Dream smirked. "You can come cuddle me in the back, George. I won't say no."

That did the trick; George snapped back to his normal self, free of pity for poor, sick Dream. He didn't want to see that, not from George, and not so soon.

The drive was filled with lively chatter. Dream forced himself to stay awake and engage in it. At some point, George pulled out his phone and went on Twitter. He groaned dramatically.

"The photos of me at the airport have already gone viral. 'George in Florida' and 'Dream Team Meetup' are both trending." He held out his phone for them to see. "Should we go ahead and make a point to address it? What should we do? We can't do a picture."

"Just post an audio recording of us talking. Or we can wait and you can take a picture with Patches," Dream suggested. In the end, they went with that, and Dream posted it to his Twitter. The internet lost it.

**Dream** @Dream



Patches picked up a stray today

[photo: George holding Patches in his arms]

**mark** @stretchmark\_\_

Replying to @Dream

HOLY SHIT ITS REAL

**Eret** @Eret

Replying to @Dream

Did you find him at the shelter?

**Antfrost** @NotAntfrost

Replying to @Dream

GEORGE

**Quackity** @Quackity

Replying to @Dream

have you two kissed already?

**Cattic** @cattics

Replying to @Dream

Does this mean we're going to get a Dream face reveal soon???

**JodieFan** @jodienotfoundd

Replying to @Dream

PATCHES MY BELOVED

Sapnap gave George a tour of the rest of the house and showed him his room. Dream wanted to help, but his friends forced him to rest on the couch while George settled in. He sat cuddled up with Patches while some random Netflix movie played.

"-so Dream has another chemo appointment tomorrow. He goes alone because of COVID guidelines still, but usually, his mom or I will drive him. Sometimes they're really quick, other times they can take a few hours. It just depends."

Dream has spent so long anticipating his meetup with George in person, planning all the fun things they would do. There was the beach, Disneyworld, Universal, and so much more just in Orlando. They were going to throw George headfirst into the most abhorrent American things they could think of. Yet here he was, getting a rundown of how to deal with Dream's cancer. Fucking pathetic.

"Also make sure he eats after appointments. The chemo makes him lose his appetite really badly so he tries to avoid eating, but the doctor told me not to let him lose any more weight or it could complicate his treatment. Don't do it too quickly after the appointment though or he'll get sick and throw up. We learned that the hard way."

Patches purred against his chest. Dream's head sagged.

"His mom comes over at least twice a week to check on him, and Drista comes with her a lot. She might actually stop by soon, she wants to meet you..."

Dream lulled off to sleep.

---

**pig simp** @spiralshapehotdog

friendly reminder that dream barely apologized for his behavior and just bc he's meeting with george doesn't mean you can ignore how problematic he is

**pig simp** @spiralshapehotdog

Replying to @spiralshapehotdog

also is anyone else dreading all the queerbaiting they're going to do for clout now that they live together?

**K A Y** @tommyshrimps

Replying to @spiralshapehotdog

He apologized and addressed it on Twitter, what more do you want?

**pig simp** @spiralshapehotdog

Replying to @tommyshrimps

Imao he made two tweets about it, he could've at least pretended he was sorry with a notes app apology

**K A Y** @tommyshrimps

Replying to @spiralshapehotdog

And people like you would still be mad about it, what's the point?

**pig simp** @spiralshapehotdog

Replying to @tommyshrimps

as a creator as big as he is, it's his job to set an example for smaller creators. ignoring what he did sends a message that it's ok to abuse your fans

---

At first, Dream didn't notice anything different about his chemo appointment. The nurse got him set up like usual, and he sat on his phone. As time went on, he felt like something was off. He checked his PICC, his messages, social media, but nothing seemed amiss. It wasn't until his infusion was over that he realized what the problem was.

Dameon never came to visit him.

He walked over to where Ms. Holly was.

"Do you know where Dameon is?"

"Clay," Ms. Holly greeted, smiling sadly. "He's in the recreation room. He received some bad news today. The doctor is talking to his mom right now, so I'm sure he'd appreciate the company."

Dream's stomach dropped. His heart pounded as he walked over to the room they had set up for patients to play games and escape their rooms. Dameon sat alone in the big room, his iPad playing Jack Manifold's stream. When Dream crept in, Dameon's face lit up.

"Hi, Clay!"

"Hey, buddy. Mind if I join you?"

He sat next to Dameon on the couch. It was clear in the week between Dream's chemo visits that Dameon was getting worse. He looked completely exhausted, and he looked so frail Dream worried he would break a bone if he tripped.

"How are you doing?" Dream asked. Dameon shrugged.

"I don't know. My mom is worried. She wants me to get a new treatment because the chemo is just making it worse, but the doctors don't think it's going to work. They said it'll be easier for me if we keep doing what we're doing."

He talked about it so emotionlessly, and that was the most heartbreaking thing. Dream could relate; he understood the morbid detachment of telling someone that it was likely you're going to die. But Dameon just turned eleven a few weeks ago. He was way too young to die, but he was old enough to know it was coming.

"I'm sorry," Dream said because there was nothing else to say.

"They want me to pick a new wish, since they don't think I'll make it to the end of the year," Dameon explained. He giggled at something that Jack said on stream.

"Well, are you?"

"Nope. I don't need it, anyway."

Dream blinked. As much as he hated thinking about that time in his life, he enjoyed his Make-A-Wish trip. "Why not?"

Dameon turned to look at him. "Because I already got to meet my favorite streamer."

Dream stared at the sly child. He's pretty sure his heart stopped working. He shouldn't be surprised; of course a mega-fan would recognize him, especially

after hanging out weekly. It was off-putting, though. Why hadn't Dameon said anything sooner?

"Is that so?" he choked out. Dameon grinned.

"Yeah. You stopped changing your voice after the first time I met you. It was kind of obvious." Dream's face burned. Did he just get roasted by a child? "Don't worry, I didn't tell anyone. Not even my mom knows."

"Well thank you for keeping my secret," Dream snorted, the tension leaving his shoulders. "It must've been a shock, meeting someone you're a fan of in the cancer ward."

"I thought it was cool. It actually made it a lot easier, knowing you were going through the same thing I did. Seeing you be strong helped a lot," Dameon admitted, pausing the stream. Dream felt a wave of emotions hit him, and his eyes blurred with tears. He was way too soon off an infusion for this.

"You're the inspiration, buddy. You're way stronger than I could ever be."

Dameon smiled and slammed into Dream's chest, squeezing him tightly. Dream hugged him back. Damn, he was so small.

"Thank you for being my friend," Dameon whispered. Dream wondered when the last time Dameon got to see his friends. He wondered if he would get to see them before his time ended. He deserved to see them. He deserved to go to StreamerCon. He deserved to get his own meet-and-greet, for crying out loud, where people came to see him.

"Are you going to tell everyone your cancer?" Dameon asked, pulling out of the hug. "I know it's hard, but...I know there are other fans out there, just like me. It would mean a lot to them to know someone like you understands."

Dream was always on the fence about telling his fans. He knew, logically, that it would come out eventually, but he wasn't sure if he should do it soon. But talking to Dameon...the answer has never been a more fervent yes.

---

**dream** @dreamwastaken

new video tomorrow! no minecraft. there's something very important I need to say and I finally feel comfortable talking about it

**dream** @dreamwastaken

Replying to @dreamwastaken

just wanted to clarify since I've seen a lot of comments talking about this, and I don't want people to think I'm baiting — the video is not related to my sexuality or relationships, nor am I quitting youtube. you'll see tomorrow!

## Notes:

Next chapter is: "Interlude, the World Reacts." It'll be a short detour from the story, sprinkling in a lot of social media and even a few introspective POVs from other characters. After that, it's back to the pain and sadness :)

## Chapter 6: Interlude: The World Reacts

## Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

I'm a made man, made wishes

I ain't scared, I ain't flinching

Sorry momma but I gotta say it

But where I'm from they don't make bitches

Let's do it

**Tubbo**

I saw your tweet! Want you to know that I'm here for you! You're the coolest dude I know!

**Dream**

thanks tubbo, you're pretty cool too :)

**Tommy**

if your video tomorrow is about your cancer, i kindly request you name it 'fuck cancer'

**Dream**

it is about that! but also no! I don't want youtube to take it down lol

**Tommy**



that would literally be a hate crime against cancer patients, just cancel them

what about 'Minecraft, But I Battle Leukemia'

or 'Minecraft Speedrunner vs Cancer'

**Dream**

no

**Karl**

just wanted you to know that i talked to the others and we're all canceling our streams tomorrow for your video! we don't want to distract from it at all, i know it must be nerve wracking to talk about

**Dream**

karl!!!! you really didn't have to do that

**Karl**

it's nothing, don't worry about it. i just wish there was more we could do

**Dream**

having this support is more than enough, I promise

**Mom**

You sure you want to do this now? There's no pressure if you're not ready, sweetie. It's a big thing to share with that many people.

**Dream**

no, no, I'm sure, mom. I don't want to lie to people anymore

**Uploading: A.L.L.**

---

"This video- well, there's no easy way to say this. I know the past few months, there have been a lot of rumors regarding my health, and I want to address them. Growing up, I was a really healthy kid. I played outdoors all the time, I participated in sports from the time I was five. But when I was ten, we started to realize I wasn't so healthy. My mom noticed these spots on my side and took me to the hospital. We later found out those spots were petechiae, or bleeding under the skin, and I got diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia — ALL.

"I won't go into details, but let's just say I got really sick. I went through treatment for three years, including intensive chemotherapy, before I was declared fully in remission. And that's how I remained — until almost three months ago. The symptoms started coming back, so I went to the doctor, they confirmed that...I relapsed. Without any warning, I had to drop everything. When I took that break because of 'mono,' it was actually because I was starting treatment and had to stay in the hospital. I'm back at my house now and only go in for chemotherapy, thankfully, but I've got a long journey ahead for me.

"This has been hard for me, my family, and my friends to cope with. You always want the people you care about to be at their best health. Cancer, like most terminal illnesses, is extremely painful for the patient and their loved ones. I didn't want to tell you guys at first for the same reason I never talked about having cancer as a child — it only brings hurt. But, after talking to another

leukemia patient, I learned that it can also bring hope. Having cancer can feel so isolating and despairing, but every time I see another patient pushing on despite their prognosis, it brings me hope. Maybe, by sharing this, another person can feel that hope.

“The problem with cancer relapses is that they only get harder to treat. With ALL, the goal is to be ‘in remission’ after your first month of chemo, and then after that, it’s a focus on making sure it doesn’t come back. They call this remission induction therapy. When I got my second bone marrow biopsy, the cancer was still there — and quite a bit of it. I’m not going to talk statistics. You can look up and read what you want. Just know that the doctors are giving me the best treatment they can. We have a procedure lined up to help get rid of the leukemia, and another one after that if it doesn’t work. It’ll take time, but I’m not dying yet.

“I want you all to know that I’m not using this as an excuse for my absence and behavior. I do hope it provides some context, but I am still taking full accountability for what happened. You guys are my fans and have every right to be concerned, but instead, I disrespected you by getting angry at a harmless question. It won’t happen again.

“I’m sure you have a lot of questions...”

---

## **Trending**

1 . Trending

## **Dream**

Minecraft streamer Dream reveals that he has acute lymphoblastic leukemia in his latest video

Trending with **ALL, Cancer**

2 . Trending

**FUCK CANCER**

Fans of Minecraft streamer Dream show support for him and other cancer patients after his cancer diagnosis

3. Trending

**30-50%**

**meg** @meg\_sparkless

so everywhere i look says that the survival rate for relapsed ALL is 30-50% does anyone know if this is true??

4. Sports . Trending

**MLB**

**BadBoyHalo** @BadBoyHalo

**@Dream** Really hard to watch the video and hear the news all over again :( I want you to know how strong you are and that I am so proud of you!

**Tommyinnit** @tommyinnit

FUCK. CANCER.

**Ranboo** @Ranboosaysstuff

No stream tonight! #fuckcancer

## **Captain Puffy - Cara @CptPuffy**

This will now become a cancer hate page for the foreseeable future

---

"Did you know? About Dream?"

Tommy's friends, after they found out about his YouTube career, usually didn't bring it up with him. There would be the occasional congratulations on a successful video or subscriber milestone, but that was it. They went on like it was nothing, like he was just a normal, totally not famous person just like them.

That changed the day Dream posted his video.

Everyone was reeling. They wanted answers, they wanted details, they wanted to know more than beyond what Dream said in his video. There was so much uncertainty. So logically, they turned to Tommy, one of Dream's good friends. Like he would leak Dream's personal information.

Which led him to where he was now. Texting his parents to pick him up from his friend's house because he could not deal with this anymore.

He was still reeling from when Dream first texted him about the diagnosis weeks before. Every time he went to process it, his brain just...stopped. Like a mental blockade locking him out, spray-painted words on the door telling him that Dream was fine; that it was his imagination acting up. Maybe it was the distance, maybe it was because their relationship only consisted of interactions through the internet. But it didn't feel real. It didn't feel possible. Dream was- was Dream! He was the top Minecraft YouTuber, the speedrunner record holder, his friend, even a pseudo-brother at times. He's offered his support and helped Tommy so many times. Dream was a good person, a genuine person.

How could someone like that be plagued by cancer since he was a child?

"Do you want to talk about it?" his mom asked when he got into the car. Tommy shook his head. He didn't say a word.

When he got home, all he wanted was a distraction. None of his friends were streaming today, a joint decision to support Dream, but he knew a few of them would still be playing online. They were like him. They turned to pixelated worlds to avoid the problems in the real one. Even if there was no one else to play with, his goal was only to dig himself into a hole — but in Minecraft.

He logged on and noticed that Philza was on. Amazing! Pog! This couldn't have worked out better. Nothing could distract him better than reacting with the Minecraft legend himself. He joined the VC.

"What are we doing today, Big Man?"

"Tommy?" Wilbur said.

Wait. Wilbur?

Tommy glanced at the VC again and realized he missed two other people in the chat with Phil. Wilbur and Techno.

Shit.

"Hey, boys. How are you all this fine day?" he said, trying to recover without a pause. Philza alone was fine, but all of the sleepy bois? On a day that wasn't fine at all? When Tommy felt like his mental foundation was turning into a canyon? Not pog. Not pog at all.

"Didn't you say you were hanging out with friends from college today?" asked Techno.

Tommy cringed. At least this was just a voice call, so they couldn't see his panic. "Yeah, right. We, uh, had to cancel."

"You texted me an hour ago that you were at your friend's house," Wilbur pointed out. Oh. Right. He did do that.

"Yeah, my, uh. My parents wanted me home early."

Phil huffed. "Why?"

Goddamnit. Why weren't they letting this go?

"I needed to do some chores. It's not a big deal."

"If you needed to do chores, then why are you playing Minecraft right now?" Wilbur pressed. Tommy wanted to scream.

"Wha- Why are you acting all sus of me? It's not a big deal!"

"Tommy," said Phil. He was using that tone he always used to calm Tommy down. "We're worried about you. You normally open up about this kind of thing, but you haven't come to any of us to talk about Dream's situation. Are you sure you're coping okay with it?"

Tommy was caught. He was caught in 4k. Of course, he was, these guys knew him better than anyone else. That didn't mean he was confessing, though. Tommy's seen TV. You can't let them crack you this early on.

"What the hell? I'm fine. I just don't want to fucking gossip about something like that."

"It's not gossiping to process your emotions, Tommy," Techno deadpanned.

Tommy was ready with another retort: it was on the tip of his tongue, the final blow to shut this whole conversation down.

But then Wilbur opened his big, stupid mouth.

"It's okay to be struggling right now, Tommy."

Fuck you.

Tommy just stopped. Stopped moving, stopped thinking, stopped arguing, stopped breathing. He stared at his screen, at the Minecraft world in front of him, his friend's characters staring at his character. Staring at him. Staring through him, right at the barrier in his mind. Tommy didn't want to look, didn't want to see it himself, but suddenly he was standing in front of the wall. It was tall, so tall he couldn't even see the sky beyond it. It was secured with chains and blockades. It was impenetrable.

It was crumbling.

"Tommy? Are you okay?"

That was a stupid fucking question. Of course he wasn't okay. How could he be okay right now? Who would ever be okay in this situation? Everything was going to shit; everything was falling apart and he was abso-fucking-lutely not okay.

"No, Wilbur. I'm not. Are you fucking happy now? I fucking hate this and I don't know what to do, how to react, like what the fuck-" He took a sharp, shaky breath. God, pull it together, Tommy. Are you really going to lose it right now? Are you really going to cry about it like a baby? Did you see Dream crying when he talked about it? No. Get over yourself, it's not even your fucking problem.

"We know. It sucks, mate. We're all struggling with it, I promise," said Phil.

Techno hummed. "Just tell us what you're thinking."



Tommy definitely wasn't going to do that. They didn't need front row seats to the boxing ring in Tommy's mind. "I just- it doesn't make any sense. Like, how could this happen to- to Dream? To one of our friends? This is...this is something that happens in movies. Fiction. It can't be real."

It couldn't. Dream was a ~~brother~~ bastard. He couldn't be sick. He couldn't be dying. They must be living in a simulation because there's no logical explanation otherwise.

Wilbur laughed. "I feel the same way. I swear I've read everything I could about leukemia now, but it still doesn't make sense in my mind that it's something Dream is going through. It's fucking terrifying, I'm not going to lie."

"We're all struggling with processing it, Tommy. You don't need to feel like you're alone. I talked with George the other day, and he said he's still having a hard time even though he lives with Dream now. It's a huge thing, so you don't need to feel bad if you're not coping," Phil reassured him. It was nice, knowing that he wasn't alone. That he wasn't the only one fighting a mental blockade.

It didn't make him feel any less shitty.

"Do you think he'll be okay?" Tommy asked, wanting the conversation focus to be anything but him. His friends paused, and Tommy realized that this topic was way worse.

"Tommy..." murmured Phil.

"Never mind, forget I ever said anything-"

"No, no, we should talk about it if you want to-" Techno tried, but Tommy cut him off.

"I don't want to. I really don't want to."

"But-"

"Can we please talk about something else? Anything else? I know you're worried about me but I'm not- I can't, not yet-"

The wall was crumbling, but it still stood. Looming. Protecting. Waiting.

"Okay. Okay, mate. That's fine, we can do that. What do you want to talk about, then?" Phil tried to soothe him. Tommy's hands were shaking, he couldn't even use his mouse or type anymore.

"Nothing. Can we- Can we just play? Please."

"Of course," said Wilbur, his voice soft.

One day, the wall would come down. Tommy knew that, as much as he dreaded it. But at least he knew he had the best people in the world to stand there with him when the blockade fell.

---

### **Group Chat: DONT TELL DREAM**

**Sapnap**

Hey @everyone. Thanks for being so supportive to Dream and skipping streaming today, it's been a huge help

As you know, Dream has been on chemo for almost three months now. He shaved his head because of hairloss over a month ago

I was thinking of holding a surprise stream where we shave our heads on camera BBH style in solidarity with Dream. It doesn't have to be your whole

head if you don't want, nor do you have to do it at all. You can just join in to show your support. Let me know if you're interested!

All money raised will be donated to cancer research and cancer patients!

**Jack Manifold**

Oh I've so got this

**Bad**

Count me in!

**Niki**

Me too!

**Foolish**

I'll shave my head :)

**Ponk**

Same here!

**Wilbur**

I love this idea. I will shave a part of my hair

**George**

We're thinking of doing it soon, while there's still a lot of talk and hype around Dream's diagnosis. We really want to raise as much money and awareness as possible

**Hannah**

Texting my hairstylist friend now. I think I'd look badass with a side shave

---

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

a thread explaining Dream's cancer diagnosis and how serious this situation actually is:

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

ALL is normally a very treatable cancer, especially in children and young adults. if it's found early enough, the patient should be fine. however, every time you relapse, it gets harder and harder to treat and more likely to come back again (1/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

Dream never said his prognosis, but the 30-50% statistic is very real. does it necessarily apply to Dream? no, but he did say he still has leukemia in his bone marrow after his remission induction therapy, which is not good (2/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

i'm not trying to scare fans or spread rumors that he's dying, but i do want people to be aware of what this means. my mother is a breast cancer survivor, and it got worse before it got better (3/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

so i don't want anyone to be confused or annoyed when he starts making less content. right now, his priority should be fighting cancer, not coming out with another minecraft manhunt video. if i see ANYONE pestering him over this, i will go feral (4/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

i also don't want to see any cringy tiktoks or fanart/fics romanticizing his REAL ILLNESS for the sake of DNF or other ship content. i don't care that you are a shipper, i do care that you're exploiting something like cancer for content (5/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

if you want to make content addressing or supporting him/cancer in general, that's completely different! i just don't want people to romanticize something that could be really hurting/killing Dream (6/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

also, if he happens to express symptoms on stream or something, don't clip it and make compilations videos or put sad songs over it. that is super weird and insensitive (7/?)

**Rose :) @imblushingroses**

Replying to @imblushingroses

to sum it up, Dream was very brave for telling us. he did not need to, but he cared about us to tell us the truth, and we should focus on supporting him. this is not fiction, this isn't fault in our stars. this is real life and Dream's battle, so please respect that (8/8)

---

Sapnap warned George before he made it out to Florida. "You keep thinking it will get better. It doesn't. It never fucking does."

George understood that. He thought he was prepared for that. He knew it wouldn't be like how they dreamed, that the plans they made on endless late-night calls would have to wait to happen — if they got to happen at all. But still, he wasn't prepared. There's no preparing when you have to watch someone you love and care for die.

Dream was currently passed out on the couch, his head in George's lap, his feet in Sapnap. His beanie was askew, getting pushed down to his eyes. After posting the video announcing his cancer, Dream had been so stressed and emotionally drained that he crashed just twenty minutes later. George was grateful. This way, it would be a little bit before he saw the responses flooding in. People would have more time to process it. Any negative comments (and there always were, especially when it came to Dream) would be drowned out by overwhelming love and support from fans. That's all Dream needed right now.

That, and a peaceful sleep. George knew he wasn't sleeping much anymore, both from stress and discomfort. For once, it looked like Dream was going to get both things he needed.

George gently adjusted Dream's beanie so it wasn't in his eyes. His friend's nose twitched but he didn't wake up. Glancing over at the final member of their trio, he found Sapnap aggressively typing as he messaged the group chat about their surprise fundraiser stream.

"I'm kind of surprised," George announced. Sapnap paused to give him a weird look.

"Uh...context?"

"I'm surprised that he told them. I mean, I figured he wanted to tell them eventually, but this was just...way sooner than I expected."

Sapnap put down his phone. "Yeah, me too. When it started, I got the vibe that he didn't want to tell anyone, even me. I mean, he never wanted to tell us about when he was a kid. He just felt like it couldn't be avoided this time."

"Yeah." George spaced out, watching the steady rise and fall of Dream's chest. There was a hypnotizing relief in the action. "I'm...I'm glad he's opening up now. Don't get me wrong. I think he'll need the extra support. But- I don't know. Maybe I'm thinking too much into this."

"What is it, dude?"

"I'm just worried that he's opening up now because he's scared that he..." George's voice grew thick, and he cleared his throat. "You know. That he thinks he won't be...around to do it later."

To George, that was the scariest thought of them all. That, somehow, Dream had a feeling that this was going to turn bad, and he was bracing for it. It could be subconsciously, it could be consciously. Maybe George was too deeply stuck in naive denial, but he didn't want Dream to be bracing for a possible early death. He wanted Dream to be focusing on getting better, planning what they were going to do when he was in remission and healing.

He didn't want Dream to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

"He'll be okay, George. Dream won't let this beat him."

"You can't know that, Sap."

"Yeah." Sapnap stared at Dream too. "But we have to keep saying it. Because he won't. He won't say it and believe it. So we'll just do it for him."

---

[Tiktok video]

"What Dream's latest video meant to me as an MYCT fan with stage 3 non-Hodgkin lymphoma:

"So I've been a fan of Dream for about a year now, and I actually became a fan around the same time I got diagnosed with lymphoma. Watching him and other creators videos was what really got me through my treatments, especially when I was hospitalized. They always brought a smile to my face.

"Watching Dream's video about relapsing with ALL was very surreal for me. Dream was there for me during my worst moments — I watched his vs four manhunt video the day the doctor told me I was at stage 3 — and to know he already went through something similar and was doing it again — I cried, I'm



being completely honest. I literally sat there and bawled. I've never felt that connected with a content creator before, even to other influencers with cancer.

"Seeing Dream talk about it and be that strong...like things have not been going well for me lately, the treatments aren't really working, and it sounds like Dream's aren't either, which **breaks** my fucking heart. But he doesn't sound scared, and it's made me so much more determined to keep going and enjoy life, no matter how much longer I have left. I really wish Dream the best with his treatment. Fuck cancer."

---

**Jacob** @shewwwmydude

Just woke up to find out that Dream has fucking cancer lmao

**bitchez** @bibliothelove

Replying to @shewwwmydude

omg yeah, a cancer diagnosis, how hilarious

**call me Kat** @gogglesforgogy3

Replying to @shewwwmydude

Literally wtf is wrong with you???

---

## **Dream Announces Leukemia Diagnosis in Latest Video**

Record-setting Minecraft YouTuber Dream posted a video to his channel titled "ALL," where he announced that he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic

leukemia back in May. The YouTuber revealed that this was a relapse, and he had been first diagnosed when he was ten years old. Dream did not comment on his prognosis but did state that the original chemotherapy did not work as they hoped, and he is now seeking alternative treatments.

Fans around the world were shocked by this news. On Twitter, "F\*\*\* Cancer" and "Dream has leukemia" have trended for two days. Multiple other streamers, including Tommyinnit, Technoblade, Corpse Husband, Valkyrae, along with celebrities like Lil Nas X have made posts supporting Dream during his diagnosis.

Rumors about a possible survival rate between 30-50% have spread like wildfire after fans looked into it online. Dream has not made any statement confirming or denying these rumors.

This is not the first time Dream has trended this much in the past few months. Just a week before posting this video, Dream and streamer/roommate Sapnap announced that British streamer Georgenotfound moved to Florida to live with them. Dream also trended back in June when the Internet tried to cancel him for his inappropriate behavior toward a fan on stream. Dream yelled at a fan after they sent a message asking about his health. Dream apologized for this in his video and explained that he had been struggling with his treatment at the time and reacted poorly.

---

**Sammy** @amgealo

Sooooo am I the only one who sus about Dream's video? Like I don't want to call him a liar but all he did was talk while his Minecraft character ran around. There was no proof given at all

**lauren** @imrunningoutofideas

Replying to @amgealo

are you actually suggesting he lied??? about having cancer??? are you okay?????

**Kelsy** @KelsyGamesXO

Replying to @imrunningoutofideas and @amgealo

Wouldn't be surprised if he was doing it for clout. Probably knew he was becoming irrelevant and got desperate.

**lauren** @imrunningoutofideas

Replying to @KelsyGamesXO and @amgealo

how sad and jaded do you have to be that you think someone who has cancer is faking it?

---

**Dream** @Dream

thank you everyone for the love and support! I wish the news was better. I plan to keep making content as much as I can while focusing on getting better. I'm so lucky to have you guys as my fans and rooting me throughout this journey❤️❤️❤️

## Notes:

so, uh, after reading y'all's comments I have a feeling many of you will want to yell at me later on in the fic...so I made a Twitter! I'm an awkward asexual duckling but we can cry

together. Or talk about MCC because that gave me very strong feels.

btw pls don't bully or harass to any of the creators, I agree with the criticism but people acting like that are the source material for the toxic Twitter posts in this fic

## Chapter 7

### Notes:

(See the end of the chapter for notes.)

Chapter 7.txt

Only so much fun raises (pain for)

So I guess the rest is all on me

That will to live against what's out here

Killin kids' well kiss my ass it ain't killin' me

Dream ate too soon.

He knew it the moment he did it. He just got back from another infusion, and he knew Sappap and George were going to pester him about eating. It was bad enough when he had one friend watching him like a hawk; with two, he didn't go to the bathroom without them knowing. He knew they meant the best. They

wanted to make sure he was safe and didn't get hurt or have a medical emergency when they weren't paying attention. With the way he's been feeling lately, it wasn't much of a stretch. He wanted to get it over with. He had plans to stream with his friends. So when he got home from his chemo appointment, he went straight to the fridge and pulled out some leftovers his mom brought over.

And now, here he was, puking his guts out into the toilet while George rubbed his back and Sapnap brought him water. At least no one needed to hold his hair back.

"You should go rest," Sapnap suggested. Dream shook his head miserably.

"I promised you guys I'd stream. The fans--"

"Yeah, and we're telling you to not," scoffed George. He patted Dream's back gently. "We can just stream later tonight, okay? You need to rest first."

It would be the second stream he canceled on his fans since he announced his diagnosis last week. He canceled appearing on Karl's stream yesterday too because he was too tired to get out of bed. He wasn't sure how they would react if he canceled again. Probably by getting #IsDreamDead trending.

He didn't regret telling his fans. The love and support he received was amazing, and the sweet messages he received from cancer survivors and patients made it so worth it. But now he was being looked at under a magnifying glass at all times. Anything he did or said was interpreted and analyzed by fans more than ever. People wanted to know his prognosis, which was annoying, but not surprising. He anticipated this.

At least he wasn't doing as bad as he could. Like Dameon. Dameon...wasn't doing good.

Dameon's mom actually came to talk to him after his infusion. He's met Mrs. Simmons before multiple times; she was a kind-hearted, hard-working woman that wanted the world for her son. She fondly started calling Dream "one of her babies" after seeing how attached Dameon was to him. She's never come to see him without Dameon, though.

"Hi, baby. I'm not bothering you, am I?" she said, poking her head in. Dream shook his head.

"No, it's okay. I just finished up. How can I help you, Mrs. Simmons?"

"Dameon is sleeping right now. You already know this but...he's not doing very good," the pain in her eyes forced Dream to look away. "He showed me that video. I'm telling you, if I hadn't met you myself, I would not believe that the YouTuber my boy loved watching so much was his hospital friend."

She chuckled and walked so she could sit next to Dream, grabbing his hand. "I just wanted to thank you for being there for my baby. Despite everything with his health, this is the happiest I've seen him since Christmas. I wish it was under different circumstances, but I'm glad my boy got to meet you."

Dream gulped down his emotions. "Of course, Mrs. Simmons. I just wish there was more I could do."

Mrs. Simmons patted his head. "You're a sweet boy, Clay. Just keep making those videos and making my baby smile. That's all I could ever ask."

An idea came to Dream's mind. He's been thinking about it for a while now, but he wasn't sure how to bring it up. Now seemed a better time than ever.

"Actually, Mrs. Simmons, if you don't mind me asking..."

---

Sneaking a PC gaming setup into a hospital was not the hardest thing Dream's ever done...but it was definitely up there.

Okay, he wasn't sneaking it in, per se. The hospital knew, the nurses were even helping out. The problem was getting it set up in Dameon's room without him knowing. He arranged with Mrs. Simmons to have him out in the recreation room while Dream and Sapnap brought in the computer. George wanted to help, but he wasn't an approved visitor under their COVID guidelines. Instead, they had George back home waiting to play on the SMP so Dameon would have someone to interact with.

"I can't believe you went and adopted a child and didn't even tell us," Sapnap complained as he settled the monitor on the hospital table. Dream set the PC on a chair and put the keyboard and mouse on the bedside table.

"Hey, it was just as unexpected for me. You got the hat, right?"

"LAFD beanie courtesy of one really confused Quackity." Sapnap pulled it out of his pocket. "I'm pretty sure Quackity thinks you're the one that wanted it."

"Who says I don't? Maybe I should make him send a second one," Dream snickered, adjusting his own black beanie and matching mask. He also wore sunglasses because Dameon's mother asked if she could record Dameon's reaction for the family. He didn't think they were going to leak the video, but he also didn't want to risk it.

"I think I'm going to hang around to meet him and then run back home so I can jump online and actually play with you guys. There's no point in having two people hover over Dameon while he plays Minecraft," Sapnap said. Dream nodded. The plan was to let Dameon play around on the SMP with his Minecraft account. He knew there were a couple people on there right now, and Ranboo might be streaming. He never got to ask Mrs. Simmons how she felt about him

interacting with other streamers or even appearing on a stream, but she would be in the room the whole time. If it came up, he could just ask.

The door opened and froze. Dameon stood there, eyes wide and darting between Dream, the setup, and Sapnap. Dream laughed, bending over as he started wheezing, while Sapnap waved.

"Hey, Dameon. It's nice to meet you."

Dameon kept staring, eyes wide and bulging. He turned back to his mom, only to find her hiding her laughter while she recorded on her phone. Dameon looked at the room, taking a tentative step forward.

"How...you're..." He gestured broadly.

"Surprise!" Dream cheered. "I know you love watching us play on the SMP, so I thought I'd bring it to you! How would you like to play on my account?"

"No way..." Dameon breathed. He turned to Sapnap. "Can I give you a hug?"

His best friend laughed and nodded. "Of course." He opened his arms wide and Dameon practically jumped into them. Then he turned to Dream and tackled his waist. Despite being so tiny, he still had some weight on him, almost making them buckle over. Or maybe Dream was just getting too weak.

...yeah, he wasn't going to unpack that.

"You excited, baby?" Mrs. Simmons asked. Dameon nodded fervently.

"I'm going to get to play with Dream! On the DreamSMP! Is there going to be anyone else we're going to play with? Are you going to stream?"

"George is back at our place waiting to play with you, and Sapnap's going to go back and join him," Dream explained. Dameon looked a little bummed that



Sapnap would be leaving, and he gave Sapnap the biggest puppy eyes. The younger man's face pinched with emotion.

"Hey, now that I met you, I'm going to force Dream to let me come to every appointment, okay?" said Sapnap, and Dameon started nodding enthusiastically.

"Okay! I can't believe I get to play with the Dream Team!" He pulled Sapnap in for another hug. After he left, Dream got Dameon settled in his hospital bed while Dream perched in a seat next to it. He ran over the basic keyboard commands and let Dameon experiment a little with it until Sapnap texted and said he was back home. Since they weren't streaming, he just had Discord on speaker on his phone.

"Hi Gogy!" Dameon squealed. George chuckled.

"Hi Dameon. I'm sorry I couldn't meet you. I'll sneak into the hospital soon, I promise," he said, making Dameon freak out some more.

"How about a tour of the SMP?" Sapnap offered.

"YES, YES, YES, YES, YES!"

They put Dameon in creative mode to make it easier for him to get around. They started outside Pandora's Vault, before heading to Bad and Skeepy's place, then Tommy's hotel, a few other player's bases and homes, and then the community house, much to Dameon's excitement. After that, they went to the remains of L'Manburg, Pogtopia, and even Logstedshire.

"This is where you abused a child!" Dameon declared, nearly giving Dream a heart attack while his friends cackled.

"Please don't say that around your mother without context. It was roleplay for character plot, I promise," Dream turned to Mrs. Simmons and she just smirked

and shook her head, going back to her book. She was probably used to this from Dameon.

On their way to Snowchester, they ran into Ranboo while he was streaming. Technoblade, Tubbo, Philza, Niki, and Tommy were all with him, much to Dameon's delight.

"Can I meet them? Please? Please?"

"I think Ranboo's streaming right now..." Dream turned to Mrs. Simmons, who worried her bottom lip. "We can give him a fake name to hide his identity from fans. That's what we did with my sister."

"And everyone loves Drista! Please, Mom?"

Philza sent a message in the Minecraft chat: **Is that Drista?**

After enough begging, Mrs. Simmons conceded. "You can call him Day. That's his nickname."

"Perfect." He sent a message in Discord, asking Ranboo if they were interrupting anything important (he was pretty sure there wasn't a lore stream, but he's been out of the loop with the SMP since his treatment started). Ranboo explained that they were just messing around and discussing lore with the fans, and that they were welcome to join in on the call.

"Hello?" Dream said. "Can you guys hear me alright? I'm calling from my phone right now."

"We can hear you alright," Niki said, while Tommy asked, "Why are you calling in from your phone? Are you not at your house?"

"Uh, no, I'm actually in the hospital," Dream realized too late how bad that sounded. He had Ranboo's stream pulled up, and he could see chat flying by.

His friends went dead silent. "I'm fine. I actually want you to meet someone. That's why I'm here. Say hi."

"Hi," Dameon said, sounding a lot more shy than usual. That's what an audience of 100k people did to you.

"Was that a child?" Tubbo screeched.

"I thought Tommy was the only child allowed on the SMP," Techno said, much to Tommy's indignation.

"Guys, meet Day. I met him at the hospital when I started getting my treatments. He's a big fan," said Dream, earning a coo from Niki and Tubbo.

"Hello, Day. How old are you?" asked Phil.

"I'm eleven," Dameon admitted, hiding his face into Dream's arm. Dream laughed.

"Why are you being so shy right now? When I met you, you literally barged into my hospital room and jumped on my bed when I was getting an infusion."

"Well, you were watching Tommy's stream. No one else at the hospital watches it. I got excited," Dameon defended, earning another round of coos, this time Ranboo and Sapnap joining in.

"Wait, wait, wait. Dream was watching Tommy's stream while he was in the hospital?" Techno pointed out, and Tommy started screeching, clearly embarrassed and trying to hide it.

"Yeah, I always watch you guys stream when I'm here. It just makes it easier," Dream admitted with no shame. He knew the fans would go crazy about it and, judging by Ranboo's chat, they were.

"DREAAAMMM!" his friends cried.

"Chat, chat, calm down!" Ranboo laughed.

"Tell us a little about yourself, Day," Niki prompted once everyone settled down. They decided to head to Snowchester as a group. Ranboo and Tubbo were determined to give Dameon a personal tour.

"Uh, I don't know," Dameon giggled shyly. He turned to Dream for reassurance, and he smiled and nodded. "I have leukemia. I've been in the hospital since Christmas."

"Oh, wow," Phil gasped. "That's a long time."

"Yeah. I was born with an immunity-"

"Immunodeficiency," Mrs. Simmons corrected.

"So they were too worried about COVID to let me go home while I was getting treatments," Dameon explained.

"Was that your Mum, Day?" Tommy asked. Dameon nodded even though they couldn't see him.

"Yeah! Mom, say hi!"

Mrs. Simmons looked nervous, but she leaned closer to the phone. "Hello."

"Hi Mrs. Day!" Sapnap greeted, and Mrs. Simmons chuckled.

"Hello, Sapnap. It was nice to meet you today. And please, call me Mama Day."

"You've met Day's mum, Sapnap?" asked Tubbo. Dream was about to explain how they surprised Dameon, but Mrs. Simmons cut him off.

"Of course I've met Clay's friends. He's my little white baby; you think I don't know my baby's friends?"

Everyone burst out laughing. Ranboo's chat started spamming 'LITTLE WHITE BABY.' Mrs. Simmons smiled and patted Dameon's head.

"Wait, but have you met Clay's boyfriend?"

"TOMMY!"

"Boyfriend? You telling me you have a boyfriend and I haven't met him yet?" Mrs. Simmons scolded, and Dream's face burned.

"He's actually here right now. He's that guy," Dameon pointed at George's Minecraft character. Dream shook his head aggressively.

"No, no, no, it's a joke, I swear, George, tell her it's a joke."

"But Dreaaaammm~" George cooed, and Dream groaned.

"I hate all of you."

After a tour of Snowchester, they decided to let the chat ask Dameon questions. Ranboo filtered and picked which ones to ask — mostly going with friendly and simple ones like 'what's your favorite color' and 'when did you get into Minecraft.' He even got asked who his favorite streamer was, and after a long pause, Dameon admitted,

"Well, it used to be Tommy," he said.

"Used to?" Tommy cried.

"Get wrecked," laughed Tubbo.

"But now it's Dream because he's my best friend."

"Oh god. My heart. This is too cute for my content," Techno cried.

"I'm going to start crying, that's so sweet," said Niki.

Dream smiled and rubbed Dameon's head, skewing his beanie. Dameon giggled and reached over to hug his arm.

Ranboo asked the next question. "Okay, so the chat is asking what grade you are in."

Dameon barked with laughter. "I'm not in school! The only due date I have to worry about is my funeral."

Dream choked.

He could tell all of his friends were panicking and awkwardly laughing — how do you respond to an eleven-year-old child joking so casually about their death?

Dream gasped and wheezed harder than he ever has before while Mrs. Simmons quietly scolded Dameon, shaking her head with embarrassment. Dameon looked way too proud of himself.

"You can't make jokes like that, bud," Dream gasped. Dameon shrugged.

"You're the one that compares his odds to a coin flip."

Dream giggled a bit hysterically. "No, I don't!"

"Yes, you do! You literally joked about it when you were getting scolded by Nurse Holly for complaining about your infusion. You said that you had the odds of a coin flip and then tried to flip a coin to predict the future. Heads you live, tails you don't. But then Ms. Holly snatched the coin out of mid-air like a ninja so we never got to see!"

"Ok so...maybe I recall that."

"Have you seen the Temple of the Undying yet?" Phil asked, smoothly moving on to a new topic. There was a bit of an awkward feeling in the call, and he realized this was the closest he's come with confirming his prognosis. Even of his friends, the only ones that know the details were Sapnap, George, Bad, and a little bit with Wilbur. This was definitely getting clipped and put on Twitter.

By the time they made it to Foolish's temple, he could tell how tired Dameon was getting. The amount of energy he expended today was pretty extreme, especially for him. Dream leaned over to take control of the keyboard as Dameon's head lulled against his arm.

"Alright, guys, I think I'm going to cut it off here. Day's getting pretty tired."

The group hummed sympathetically and wished Dameon well. The boy tiredly said his goodbyes.

"Thanks for playing with me. Thank you, Dream," he pulled Dream's down for a tight hug, making him let out an audible oof. Mrs. Simmons kissed her son's forehead before leaning toward the phone again.

"Thank you for playing with my baby. You have no idea what it means to see your child smile like this, especially when it's gotten so hard for him," she said, getting a little choked up on her words. She placed a hand on Clay's head too. "Now you keep taking care of Clay. He's gonna need good people like you."

"Yes ma'am."

"Of course."

"We will!"

"You too, chat people. You be nice to my baby. It's hard for him too." She looked directly at Ranboo's chat while she spoke, which was very amusing.

"Alright, bye!" he said, hanging up as his friends responded with their farewells. Next to him, Dameon was already passed out. Well, he'd call that a success.

---

**soph** @pocketfullofrainshine

I can't tell if my favorite part of the stream was Day or Mama Day lmao. I was crying the whole time, it was so sweet

**Mandy** @mandybaker49

i'm fucking crying, dream met a fan in the cancer ward and fucking let him stream on his account and play with his friends. like they were so soft together and his mom called dream her little white baby, i'm BAWLING

**Miki | COMMISSIONS OPEN** @miki draws

Fanart from Ranboo's stream! I love Day and Mama Day

[Drawing of masked dream being hugged by a small dark-skinned child wearing a mask like his. A comic of a dark-skinned woman with a smiley mask asking why she hasn't met Dream's boyfriend while Dream panics. A picture of all three of them in front of the orange blood cancer awareness ribbon.]

**Jack or Jill** @whostolemybreakfast

Ok but as a stage three breast cancer patient, Day and Dream joking about dying like that was a total mood

**nat** @nataleighbrown3



Replying to @whostolemybreakfast

actually it's not a mood?? it was so triggering to watch a literal child joke about his life and Dream just laughed about it??? that's so inappropriate

**Jack or Jill** @whostolemybreakfast

Replying to @nataleighbrown3

Triggering to who, he's got cancer, living or dying isn't really his choice and Dream probably laughed for the same reason I did- it's relatable

**nat** @nataleighbrown3

Replying to @whostolemybreakfast

as an influencer Dream should be held responsible to only send a positive message. seeing all these clips and tweets about a coin flip is really messed up and more people should be mad about it

**Jack or Jill** @whostolemybreakfast

Replying to @nataleighbrown3

Not you trying to cancel a cancer patient for coping with their diagnosis, you're straight clowning. Day isn't a baby, if this helps him, then leave him be. Positivity won't heal him

**Rose :)** @imblushingroses

OK BUT NO, WHAT IF THEY CALL HIM DAY AS SHORT FOR DAYDREAM AFTER DREAM I CANT. BIG BROTHER DREAM IS TOO MUCH FOR MY HEART

**Rose :)** @imblushingroses

Replying to @imblushingroses

I just saw someone joke about daydream being their ship name and I just want you to know that I have a gun and DAY IS FUCKING ELEVEN YOU SICK FUCKS

**Young Buck** @sjdjonxruo

Am I the only one who is really stressed for Dream now? Like there was that whole 30-50% stat going around, but now Dream just kinda confirmed it??? I really hope he's ok

**call me Kat** @gogglesforgogy3

i saw coin flip was trending and i thought ludwig did it again with his coin flip predictions, but nope. it's just dream making jokes about how he flipped a coin to predict if he was going to die or not

**bitchez** @bibliothequelove

Replying to @gogglesforgogy3

No but legit I was watching Ludwig's stream today and people were asking him to do a coin clip for Dream?? I felt so bad, he was so uncomfortable

---

The day of the surprise stream dedicated to Dream started out as a very bad day.

He woke up with zero appetite. He didn't feel like eating all of yesterday and only choked down some grapes because George begged him to. He was never that big, but now he was so skinny and weak — any muscle he once had eaten away. He wasn't skeletal (not yet) but he still hated looking this way. Feeling this way. He didn't remember it being this bad the first time.

But, he supposed, that's because it wasn't this bad the first time.

"Dream?" George knocked on the door before opening it. "Are you not feeling any better?"

He shook his head miserably, digging into his pillow. George walked over and sat on the edge of the bed.

"Do you think you can stomach some oatmeal? Please?" He held out the bowl. Dream side-eyed it, wanting nothing to do with the food, but he knew he had to eat. He sat up and shakily took the oatmeal. He ate painfully slow, the food tasting more bland than usual.

"You should rest," George said, taking the mostly empty bowl. Dream shook his head, feeling miserable.

"All I do is sleep. I'm tired of sleeping."

George sighed and put the bowl down on the table. "I get that. But you'll feel better if you do." Dream glared at the wall. "Do you have a headache? Is that why you don't want to sleep?" Dream shook his head. "Then what is it? Talk to me."

"I just-" he groaned and rubbed his face. "I feel like I've spent the past three days sleeping. I haven't been on social media or watched anyone stream, I've barely seen you or Sapnap. I know resting will help me get better but- I don't know, with Dameon's situation getting worse, I just feel like I'm wasting precious time, you know? We should be counting every second because who knows how much time I have left-"

"Don't talk like that, Dream."

"I know. I'm just being honest. I'm so fucking stressed about it, George. I'm...I'm not ready."

The tension in the room was suffocating. George sat there, tense, while Dream stared at the wall. While he's known and joked about his prognosis, he's never actually taken the time to mentally address and accept it. He's still not ready to, but that was the thing. If he kept on ignoring it, it might end up being too late.

George suddenly slid up the bed so he was sitting next to Dream. Before the taller could question it, warm arms wrapped across his chest and pushed him so he was laying down again. George burrowed into his side similar to Patches when she wanted to cuddle. Dream snorted.

"This is what it took for you to cuddle me? Smothering me into sleeping?"

"Just go to bed already, Dream. You're not going to miss anything."

That was a fucking lie.

He passed out to the sound of George breathing, and woke up to George shaking him awake. He could instantly tell how much better he felt, and Dream let out a content sigh.

"Dream, c'mon, get up," George shook him again, and Dream batted his hands away.

"What?" He turned and glared at his best friend. George was wearing a beanie pulled low on his head, which was...weird. It was summer in Florida, so it wasn't remotely cold. He didn't get much time to process or analyze it before George was dragging him to his feet.

"Do you feel better?" Dream just nodded, and George smiled. "Awesome. We have something to show you, c'mon."

He dragged Dream toward his room, opening the door cautiously. Sapnap was already in there, sitting at George's computer screen. He was also wearing a beanie.

"The camera is on, so just stay to the side. We arranged it so you can stand here in the blindspot easily."

"Wait, what?" Dream tried to tug his arm back, but he didn't have nearly enough strength or motivation. George dragged him so he was beside the desk. They must be streaming, based on their behavior, but both of George's desktop screens were blackened. "What's going on?"

George and Sapnap didn't answer him, instead exchanging matching smirks as George stepped back on camera. "Ok, here we go. Three, two, one," Sapnap said, turning on the computer screens while George pulled off the beanies to reveal their buzzed heads.

Dream could feel his blood pressure drop from the shock.

"WHAT?" He buckled, leaning against the wall. Sapnap leaped over to steady him, but Dream quickly waved off their concern. He stared at their short hair in awe. "When did you- did you do this while I was sleeping? On stream?"

"Yup. Look." George gestured to the computer screen, and he could see they were in some sort of call with maybe 30 different people — all with their cameras on, showing off their variously shaved heads. Most were shaved to buzz cuts, like Sapnap and George, but there were a couple odd ones — was that the avatar arrow on Jschlatt? Did Connor have a mohawk? Was that- did Tubbo give himself a Catholic monk cut? And it looked like Ranboo did the reverse, leaving himself a small hair cap. Oh, Dream prayed their parents would make them shave that off later.

Hannah and Puffy both shaved half of their heads, while Niki went for a full buzz. Wilbur had an undercut. Bad was completely bald once again, except this time Skeppy joined him. Quackity had his beanie off to show off his buzzed head, and Dream wondered if he did a hair reveal or if he shaved it off-screen. Even Jack joined in, going for a razor shave so he was as hairless as Dream.

It was every member of the Dream SMP, and they all shaved their heads. For him. Dream might just cry.

Oh shit, he was.

He quickly tried to wipe away his tears, but Sapnap and George noticed and cooed.

"Aww, Dream, are you crying?" They ran to ambush him with a hug. Dream tried to laugh, but his body betrayed him, and it came out sounding like a sob.

"I'm too tired to process this emotionally, give me a moment," he said, laughing in mild hysteria. He squeezed George and Sapnap tightly. Honestly, he should have expected this from Sapnap, given his reaction after he helped Dream shave his head. But the entire SMP? It was unbelievably overwhelming, and he felt his heart soar with longing as well as happiness. He really wished he could meet everyone and hug them too. Hug them and thank them for everything they've done for him. He wanted to meet these amazing people that changed his life before...before it was over.

George and Sapnap went back in front of the camera. They passed Dream a pair of bluetooth headphones so he could hear everyone on the Discord call.

"Dream, Dream, my brother. Do we look identical now?" Tommy proudly asked.

"I feel like I've lost my branding," Jack said.

"My head feels so weird," Niki said, poking at her buzz.

Dream laughed. "You all look great, really. Well, except, like, four of you."

"Oh, I know, Philza looks like an egg," said Ranboo, and the eldest member sputtered indignantly.

"Excuse me?"

"Should I start wearing wigs now?" Eret wondered.

"George definitely looks the most like an egg," Karl snickered.

"Shut up!"

Wilbur groaned. "Oh, god, there are way too many people in this call."

"Another \$10,000 raised in the next five minutes, and Connor, Schlatt, Tubbo, Ranboo have to keep their hair like that," Puffy challenged.

"Raised? You raised money?" Dream asked, and the call fell silent to let George and Sapnap explain.

"Yeah, the fans had to meet a certain fundraising goal to get people to shave their heads. And they went crazy, we had to keep changing our donation goal like every two minutes. Look how much we raised." Sapnap pointed to a number on the lower half of the stream, and Dream did a double-take.

"No way- \$950,372? How?"

"We're trying to get it to a million. Chat, if we hit a million by the end of the stream, I'll make Tubbo go out in public like that!" Tommy called, and donations started flooding in again.

"The fans have been awesome dude. There were also a ton of creators who joined in too, look." George pulled up the top donors list. MrBeast sat at the top with \$100,000, while Markiplier donated \$50,000. Sykunno, Valkyrae, and Corpse donated \$10,000 each, along with multiple other Among Us streamers he knew making various thousand-dollar donations.

"We're all going to make our own donations later, so this isn't even close to the total. The fundraiser will be open all week for people to donate," Sapnap explained.

"You guys are awesome," Dream said with as much genuine feeling as he could. "I can't believe it. Thank you so much."

He paused, considering, before reaching his arm into the stream camera and rubbing George's shaved head. He couldn't get over how different he looked. How did he still look so pretty though? It wasn't fair.

"Dream arm reveal?" Skeppy gasped, and Dream chuckled.

"More like PICC reveal." He poked at the sleeve holding his PICC line in place.

"Chat, there is a giant catheter pumping drugs to my heart and it sucks ass."

"Language."

A lot of people in chat were asking if it hurt, and Dream shrugged before lowering his arm. "Does it hurt? I mean, it doesn't tickle, but it's better than IV infusions, that's for sure. It can't get wet, though, so that makes showering a hassle."

Within five minutes of Dream coming on, they hit a million dollars raised, and the number was still rising rapidly. According to Sapnap, they've barely been streaming for an hour. Dream felt high from how excited he was.



"This is even better than my Make-A-Wish day," he said. Somehow, through the noise of everyone celebrating, Fundy heard him.

"What was your trip, Dream?"

Dream flushed bright red. "Uh..." He glanced at Sapnap for help, but his best friend just started cackling.

"If you don't tell them, I will, and I'll post the evidence."

"No, no! I wished to become a demigod and I got to meet Rick Riordan and some of the Lightning Thief cast."

"Fucking nerd," Techno teased.

"Did you get to meet Logan Lerman? I must know immediately," demanded Hannah.

Dream chuckled. "No, I wish though."

The stream continued on for a little bit longer, and by the end, they raised over \$1,500,000. Dream could hardly believe it. Once the stream was over and the cameras were turned off, Dream tackled his friends with a hug again, squeezing them by their necks.

"Thank you. Thank you so much."

## Notes:

HAPPY PRIDE MONTH!!!!!!!!!! WE ARE ALL VALID AF AND I HOPE YOU HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE PRIDE!!!! I hope you enjoyed the soft fluff this chapter, it is my gift to you to celebrate. Enjoy it because, uh, it don't last long ahaha...

Need someone to celebrate with? An asexual homie to talk to?  
Want to yell at me for causing you pain? My Twitter! Who  
knows, maybe I'll leak my sad Spotify playlist that I listen to  
when writing on there.

## Chapter 8

### Notes:

TW!!!!!! Character death at the end of the chapter. This chapter  
is very, very sad.

(See the end of the chapter for more notes.)

Chapter 7 end

Miss me with that dead talk

Miss me my legs walk

My heart beats and my wife witness

So fuck cancer my life with me

And if I died it'd die with me, let's do it

**Betty Babe** @blueberrypie3145

if I see ONE MORE PERSON complain about how "my favorite streamer shaved  
their head, now they're bald and ugly, uwu I can't support them" I will GO  
FERAL IT WAS FOR CANCER YOU SHALLOW FUCKS

[quote tweet]

**green socks on** @justchillin\_\_\_\_

Just saw someone crying about Karl shaving his head on tiktok and people were blaming Dream in the comments,,, y'all do know going bald wasn't Dream's choice, right?

Dream snickered and liked the tweets. Overall, the charity stream was a huge success. They ended up raising over 3 million dollars in just a week, with celebrities like the Rock and Lil Nas X joining in. There was a small but loud group of 'fans' that were angry over the haircuts, which was equally infuriating and hysterical. He's watched numerous videos of people having genuine breakdowns because George was "bald" — which he wasn't, George just went for a super short buzz cut. Maybe he should feel bad over how distraught they were, but Dream just found them cringy and amusing. He loved the videos blaming him for it, like he held his friends at gunpoint and made them shave their hair off. Did they forget the part where he had no idea it was happening until they already did it? He was sleeping during it, for crying out loud!

His favorite part was seeing photos of fans who decided to shave their heads too, many of the fans with long hair donating it. This was why he loved them. This was why he was happy he told them the truth. It made all the shitty posts worth it.

"Hey, remember that your appointment is in an hour. You flushed your PICC already, right?" Sapnap pushed his door open. Dream nodded. It was another chemotherapy appointment day. "George made a smoothie for you before we go."

"Who knew George from the cooking stream would become my personal chef?" Dream mumbled.

"You better tell the fans how I'm the best cook in the world," George called from the kitchen. He passed Dream the smoothie.

"He throws up at least a third of your meals," Sapnap pointed out.

"That's because he's sick! Not because it's bad!"

Dream snickered as he drank the smoothie. The coolness felt good against a sore in his mouth, so it made it much easier to drink it all. George looked triumphant at the sight.

"See? You wish you could chef like me."

The duo started bickering, and Dream rolled his eyes. They still had some time before they needed to leave, so he settled into the barstool to chat. It's been a while since they just sat down and talked together, all three of them.

Dream...was usually sleeping most of the time now, and when he wasn't doing that, he was streaming or making videos. It was nice to just talk about their lives and joke about things that happened on stream or social media. It felt normal, it felt like before.

Oh, how he missed before.

"-and then Karl started laughing so hard he fell out of his chair-"

"Again?" Dream cried, wheezing.

"Yeah! It was even worse than the last time. It started trending so fast too, though Quackity was egging the fans on."

"Are you guys still planning to meet up?" George asked. It was an innocent question, but Sapnap flinched like it pained him. Dream's smile fell and the room felt tense.

"Uh," Sapnap glanced at Dream and then the floor. "I'm not sure anymore."

"What? You've been talking about it for months. I'm honestly surprised it hasn't happened yet. Did...Did something happen between you guys? You're not fighting, right?" asked Dream. Sapnap wouldn't meet his eyes. George wasn't looking at him either.

"No, no, definitely not. It's just...it's been kinda busy lately...you know."

Dream frowned. "I mean, we're kind of in a down part of the lore right now--"

Sapnap's face twisted with guilt.

Oh.

This was not about the lore. It wasn't even about streaming.

This was about him.

Sapnap wasn't going to visit his friends, people he's been wanting to meet for over a year, because of Dream. He was pushing it off because Dream was sick and dying of cancer, forcing Dream to put his life on pause. Sapnap was putting his life on pause too, just like his mom did. His best friend was pushing back meetups and who knows what other opportunities just to be by Dream's side. He should be grateful; should be happy he had such an amazing friend. Instead, Dream just felt frustrated, guilty, and utterly useless. Because his body was defective, he went and disrupted not only his future, but everyone else's. Did George even want to move to Florida as quickly as he did? Or was he worried that if he waited, he wouldn't have a friend to meet anymore? God, the entire DSMP shaved their goddamn heads for him, and now they were catching so much flack for it because of rude people making fun of how they looked.

Everyone was doing things for him, rearranging their plans for him. He knew this was going to happen, it was the reason he didn't want to tell anyone. Pictures of fans shaving their heads came to mind — it made him smile in the moment, but now his stomach curdled. How many of them got in trouble with their parents or made fun of at school? They didn't know him, not really, and yet they did that for him. He hated it, hated how it made him feel so — so hopeless.

"Sapnap." Dream's voice turned stern.

"What?"

"Are you pushing back the meetup because of me?"

Sapnap stared at George. "...no?"

"Nick."

"Okay, yes! I told them to hold off until we knew you'd be alright, okay?"

"And when do you think that will be, Sapnap?"

"I don't know? After the T-cell therapy, hopefully?"

Dream pulled at his beanie; it didn't have the same calming effect as pulling on his hair. He felt his emotions rising, felt his temper acting up. He took deep breaths, trying to steady it.

"And what if it doesn't work? Or what if I relapse for a third time? What then?"

"Dream," George scolded. "Why are you getting so angry about this?"

"How long are you going to put your life on hold for me?" Dream snapped. His best friends froze, but Dream just stood up and started pacing. It helped get out all this energy he felt building up inside.

"This could go on for years. Are you really wanting to wait that fucking long? I mean, think of how many things you could be doing, places you could be going. You're missing so much. What about your families, are you just not going to see them? Or what about you George, are you just planning on not going back to the UK to visit?"

"Dream-" Sapnap reached for his arm, but Dream yanked it away.

"No, I'm serious! You can't let my stupid disease fuck with your lives like this! What are you going to do if I die, huh? You spend all this time revolving your life around mine, what are you going to do if I'm gone?"

"You're not going to die, Dream," George tried, standing up as well.

"YES, I AM!"

Tears stung his eyes, his voice cracked at the loud volume. George and Sapnap just stood there, gaping, and Dream tried to breathe.

"It's a coin flip, remember? Who fucking knows what will happen to me! I could be dead by next week, I could live for another five years, I could live for another 50. We don't know, so there's no point in waiting around with me to find out! I- I should probably just move in with my parents already so you don't have to worry about me all the time. I should've done that from the start, I never should have let you get involved, I've ruined our friendship, I've ruined your lives-"

"Dream, SHUT UP!"

Sapnap slammed his hands down on the table, and the clatter made Dream startle. Sapnap's shoulders heaved from breathing so hard, his face red with anger. Oh, shit, Dream fucked up.

"We're not — we're not fucking leaving you, so just shut up already! God, why are you even saying this shit?"

Dream gaped like a fish, his temper vanished as he struggled with what to say. Sapnap looked ready to punch something again, but it was George that looked the most murderous. His anger was quiet, subtle, his face almost looking calm. Dream knew better.

"Is that really what you think?" George said, his voice cold and controlled.

"W-What?"

"Do you really think that's how it is? That we're being forced to give up our lives so we can be there for you?"

"I-I don't-"

"Answer the question, Dream."

Panic locked Dream's throat. It tightened his chest, made it feel like he was losing control of everything. Tears spilled from his eyes, and he wished they'd go away, but he couldn't stop them.

"It's...That's what it does, George. That's what cancer fucking does. It just takes. It's a virus that hurts everyone close to me, forces them to watch me turn into this-" He gestured to his thin, pale, hairless body. "And no one can help me. I can't help myself. It's just sitting and waiting and hoping the drugs do something. All you can do is watch, and everyone feels like they have to



drop everything to help, but they can't. They can't help, so they just end up watching me die."

He saw it with his parents as they cried to the doctors when he was eleven. He saw it with Drista, holding his hand every chemotherapy appointment. He saw it with Mrs. Simmons, thanking him for just being friends with her son. There's no fight, no battle like everyone says. You don't fight a disease, you just pump your body up with chemicals and surgeries and prayers and hope you make it to see your next birthday.

Strong, sturdy arms, not weakened by chemo and weight loss enveloped and squeezed him tight. He dropped his forehead to George's shoulder. Tremors shook his body.

"You're right, Dream." George said, his voice gentle but firm. He pulled back so he could meet Dream's watery eyes. "Your cancer has taken a lot. It's taken so fucking much, and it's just going to take more. So please- don't let it take away our friendship too."

Another pair of arms wrapped around him as Sapnap joined the hug. "We want to be here for you, Dream. What you're going through isn't fair; it's so messed up. I said it before, and I'm saying it again — I'm not fucking ditching you."

"We knew this was going to happen. You told us it was going to happen," George said. "And you're right, it hasn't been easy. It's sucked so much; every time you can't eat or get sick because of it, I feel like I'm losing my shit because it looks like you're withering away and there's nothing we can do. You're right. But I'm not going to leave over it because I know it sucks for you infinitely more."

Dream chuckled weakly. "It does, doesn't it?"

They laughed together, the mood feeling much more light-hearted. It felt good, getting that off his chest. Dream pulled back from the hug so he could wipe his face, and George and Sapnap did the same. Well, at least he wasn't the only one crying.

Sapnap glanced at his phone and cursed. "Shit, we should go. We're going to be late for your appointment."

Dream nodded. "I'm just going to go wash my face. I'll be right back."

He went to the bathroom, cupping water in his hands and running it over his face. When he stood back up, he stared at the mirror and wondered who was staring back at him. He hardly recognized them; sunken cheeks, bruises for eyebags, thinning eyebrows and eyelashes. Someone might as well wrap him up and turn him into a mummy at this point. While he believed his friends, believed that they really were sticking through this because they wanted to...he couldn't understand why. Why would they want to watch someone they love go through something like this? If he does die, do they really want this to be their last memories of him?

He was grateful for their support and knew he would be so much worse without them... but that desire for them to leave still remained. The chance of his untimely death was too high. He didn't want them to see that. He didn't want anyone to see that. He couldn't protect himself from cancer — the least he could do was protect them from this.

---

**Bad**

How are you feeling?? You have a chemo appointment today, right?

**Dream**

yup, on my way to it now :)

I'm doing good

**Bad**

Yay!

Tell that little guy Day that I said hi! He seems like such a sweet kid

**Dream**

haha I will, though he might lose his shit. he was wearing your merch beanie  
when I first saw him

**Bad**

( >\_< ) That's so sweet

Keep taking care of yourself, okay? Promise me you will?

**Dream**

yes sir lol

---

After his infusion, Dream and Sapnap stopped by Dameon's room. He was awake but too tired to leave his bed. His mother and his father were there; it was Dream's first time meeting Mr. Simmons, and he felt a little anxious. He held out his hand to greet the man, and Mr. Simmons brushed past it to pull Dream into a quick but firm hug.

"Nice to finally meet you, Clay. Thank you for everything you've done for my boy."

"Of course, sir," Dream said, trying not to panic or get overwhelmed. He and Sapnap went to sit with Dameon, who was watching Technoblade's stream. Despite how exhausted he looked and sounded, he was still smiling.

"If you guys did a rematch 1v1, do you think Techno would win again?"

"Yes," Sapnap declared without hesitation.

"Hey!" Dream slapped his friend's arm, and Dameon giggled. "I mean, it's hard to say. Techno is really good at PvP."

"You should do Minecraft Manhunt but it's just him hunting you down."

"Well, that, I'm sure I could win."

Sapnap snorted. "Sure, Dream."

They didn't stay for long; Dameon didn't have enough energy for a long visit. Dream's heart twisted; he knew it wouldn't be long now. They were giving Dameon blood transfusions almost weekly now, which...wasn't a good sign. The urge to scream bubbled up in Dream's chest. He hated this; he hated this so much. He wondered if Dameon was having the same thoughts as Dream — if he wanted to be left alone so people wouldn't have to see this. It didn't seem that way. Dameon clung more than usual. He was young; he needed that comfort.

"Ah, Clay, before you go," Mrs. Simmons caught him at the door. She pulled Dream and Sapnap outside for some privacy. "I know you've already done so much and I shouldn't ask for any more, it's selfish of me but—"

"You can ask anything, Mrs. Simmons. You deserve to be selfish right now," Dream said, eyeing the boy sleeping in the room. He looked more like a corpse than Dream.

Mrs. Simmons nodded shakily. "Right. Well, you mentioned you have another streamer friend that lives with you, right? Gogy?"

"George," Dream corrected with a grin. "Yeah, he moved in with us a couple of months ago."

"Well, if it's not too much, do you think we could talk to the nurses about letting him visit Dameon? I just know getting to meet another one of his idols would make his day. We don't know how much longer we have, and I want him to be happy before..."

Sapnap and Dream both blushed at being called idols. "Of course, Mrs. Simmons. I know George wants to meet him too."

"Thank you, baby. Thank you so much. I just wish he could go to that streamer convention; he talked so much about it."

"Yeah, me too..." Dream said. He wanted the exact same thing and so much more for Dameon. He would fight time if he could. He wished there was more that he could do...

He glanced at Sapnap, an idea forming. He would need approval from the doctors, and it would have to happen quickly, possibly too quickly to be achievable, but if it worked, it would be everything and more.

After all, why just bring George along when you could have all of the feral boys?

---

Mrs. Simmons cried when he proposed the idea. They talked to Dameon's doctor and got permission to hold a small meet-and-greet in the hospital outdoor courtyard. After that, he texted Quackity and Karl, who were more than eager to agree. Dream insisted on buying their plane tickets and offered to get

them a hotel room, but they just agreed to stay at Dream's house. They set it up for a week and a half out. Dream would rather they do it sooner, but his procedure to get his cells withdrawn for his T-cell therapy got in the way.

The procedure ended up getting scheduled for August 12 — his birthday, conveniently. It was the earliest they could schedule it, and Dream didn't want to wait any longer.

"I don't know, it seems like a fitting way to spend my birthday this year," Dream said. George glared. "What? It's, like, hopeful or some shit. The T-cell therapy might put me in remission!"

"You're actually an idiot."

"Well, that's mean. Anyway, it's supposed to take 4-5 hours, so you guys can just drop me off and—"

"Also not happening, idiot," Sapnap called out from the kitchen.

"But I don't—"

"If you so much as try to push away again after we literally had that talk last week, I will lose it. Again," Sapnap said, walking out into the living room. He and George fixed Dream with harsh glares. "How many times do we have to say it before it gets through that stupid, thick bald head of yours?"

"Apparently a lot more," Dream grumbled, mostly joking. His friends did not appreciate the joke.

"You're driving me crazy," George groaned. "And I'm pretty sure you're doing it on purpose, which just makes it worse."

Dream didn't answer, didn't look them in the eye. What was he supposed to do, lie to their faces? That'll just make them more upset.

Wait, maybe that's exactly what he should do.

"I'm not."

"Nope. You are. Good try though," Sapnap cut him off. Dream groaned and collapsed back into the couch.

"I don't get it. You're, like, going above and beyond to be there for Dameon. Why do you freak out when we try to do the same?" said George.

Dream wished he could run from this conversation. Temptation urged him to walk to his room and lock the door. If he wanted to go all out, he could text his mom to pick him up, and he could move back home. That would force Sapnap and George away from him.

...yeah, that was a terrible plan. He'd rather (literally) die than lose them like that. But if he didn't say something soon, he would lose them anyway.

"Dameon is just a little kid. I know what he's going through right now, and...kids don't deserve to go through that alone."

George made a strangled, frustrated sound. "And you do?!"

"No, it's not that, it's just..." Dream groaned into his hands. "I can handle it — kids like Dameon can't. And since I can handle it, it's selfish of me to ask other people to go through it with me."

"You are officially the dumbest person in the world," said Sapnap.

"No, I'm not, I just—"

"An absolute fucking idiot."

"You guys—"

"It's a wonder he made it through school."

"Someone tell the fans — Dream is the dumbest on the Dream Team, confirmed."

"I'm on it."

"Wait, George, put your phone away. Are you guys even trying to listen to me?"

"Nope."

"Not even a little bit."

Dream gaped. He was speechless. There was nothing he could say, not with his two best friends ganging up on him like this. George and Sapnap glanced at each other, looking sinister.

"Do you want me to quote you, Dream? 'Don't worry, Mrs. Simmons. You can ask for anything and be as selfish as you want right now.'" Sapnap parroted in an abhorrently high voice that felt like an insult. "Enough with the double standard. The self-pity party is not going to fly."

"I'm not pitying myself!"

"Dream." George's voice was as monotone as Techno. "You want to try again?"

Dream definitely did not pout as he glared at his best friends. Okay, so maybe he was bemoaning the woes of his illness a lot lately. Everything has just gotten so stressful — the increased attention from fans, Dameron's worsening condition, his upcoming cell withdrawal appointment. It was so overwhelming.

...shit, he really was throwing a self-pity party.



"I'm the biggest idiot in the world," Dream mumbled. Sapnap and George cheered.

"We did it! We got it through his thick skull!"

"I need a drink after all this," George mumbled, pinching the bridge of his nose. Dream sighed. He missed alcohol.

"No more thinking like that, Dream. I swear, you better promise it," Sapnap demanded.

"I promise."

---

Dream's 22 second birthday was celebrated in a hospital room, hooked up to an apheresis machine. A needle was stuck into his arm on both sides — one to draw out the cells, and the other to put the blood back in without the cells. It honestly wasn't that bad as far as procedures went. He was numb to needles and IVs at this point. It was hard to wrap his mind around the idea of them withdrawing his cells. Apparently, they were taking a lot too.

It didn't feel like a blood test or transfusion. He just laid there, a random show playing on the TV. His family and the hospital staff decorated his hospital room with streamers and balloons, and they had cake planned for after the procedure. About three hours into the procedure, he was bored out of his mind. George and Sapnap were both taking naps, and Dream was supposed to as well, but he couldn't. He went onto his phone, liking and replying to multiple birthday messages and tweets. He opened up Discord and saw that Tommy was on, which was odd. He had just checked, and he knew the teenager wasn't streaming. After a silent debate, Dream decided to call him.

"Dream? What's up, big man?"

"Not much. I just saw that you were on and was curious."

"Oh, yeah. I was on call with Tubbo and Ranboo earlier, but they just got off."

"What were you talking about? Are you guys going to meet up?"

"No. I mean, yes, we are planning that, but that wasn't what we were talking about. We, uh. We were talking about you, actually."

Dream blinked. He wasn't expecting that. "Really?"

"Yeah. Happy birthday, by the way. Big 22. You're so fucking old."

Dream snickered, rolling his eyes. "Thanks, Tommy. That's what you were talking about? My birthday?"

"No. We were...fuck, this sounds really bad out loud."

"Well, now I have to know."

There was a long pause on the line before Tommy huffed. "Do you really think you're going to die, Dream?"

Dream froze. He stared at his phone, though there was nothing to look at. Tommy didn't have his camera on. After such a long silence, Tommy started panicking.

"Shit, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean- it's just, after that comment you made on Ranboo's stream, about the coin flip-"

"You're fine, Tommy," Dream said, laughing to lighten the mood. "I mean...it's hard to say. My prognosis was 50%, and honestly, that summarizes how I feel. Some days I'm fine, some days are just...dumpster fire shit. My remission induction therapy failed, which is not a good sign, but I'm getting CAR T-cell

therapy, so hopefully, that will work. I'm actually in the hospital right now getting my cells withdrawn."

"Seriously?"

"Yeah. They're going to take them to a lab and basically genetically modify and grow my cells so that they can infuse them back in me to attack the cancer."

"That...sounds like a superhero origin story, if I'm being completely honest."

"God, I wish." Dream chuckled. "Was that all that was bothering you?" There was a long, long silence. Dream knew Tommy. The kid was never silent. Even when he was stressed, he was still as expressive, if not more. He only got quiet when he was really fucked up about something. "Tommy? Is...Is everything okay?"

He finally got Tommy to laugh. It was dark and bitter, nothing like his normal lighthearted cackle. "You should not be asking me that?"

"What? Why?"

"Why, he asks. I can't even-" Tommy cut himself off, scoffing. "It's- It's...It's so backward! I should be asking you if you're okay, you're the one that's really struggling here. People should be worried about you, so I don't get why everyone is up my ass. I'm fine, I'll figure it out, I...I just need to get over myself."

He muttered that last part, like he didn't want Dream to hear. He did. "Tommy. It's okay if you're having a hard time right now."

"No, it's not!"

God-fucking — was this how Sapnap and George felt dealing with him? No wonder they bullied him.

"Tommy." Dream took a deep breath, pushing away all his frustration. Tommy didn't need that. Right now, all Tommy needed was sincerity. "Do you know why I never told anyone about my childhood cancer?"

"Uh... 'cause it's personal and shit?"

Dream snorted. "That's part of it, yeah. But I knew, if I told people, I was going to be putting a bit of that stress on them, and they were going to worry about me. Even before I relapsed, I knew that would happen. That's what always happens, and I hate it so much. I didn't want my friends to experience that, so I kept it all in. When I relapsed, I still didn't want to tell people, but I felt like I had to, you know? It wasn't fair to you guys to keep lying at that point. But I knew that telling everyone was going to cause a lot of people pain too. What you're feeling, Tommy... it's normal. I've seen it with my family, with Sapnap and George. You don't have to be diagnosed with cancer to be hurt by it."

Dream felt like shit for making Tommy feel like shit. The kid was too selfless for his own good sometimes. He could hear muffled sniffles, and he knew Tommy was trying to hold it all in. Dream couldn't blame him. He knew how it felt.

"Thanks. I, uh. I really needed to hear that." Tommy cleared his throat aggressively, followed by another sniffle. "I, uh, think I should talk to Wilbur- I mean, I promised Wilbur I'd stream with him. Yeah. I should go. Thanks for talking with me, big man. Sorry you had to spend your birthday in the hospital, that's total shit."

"Eh, it's not the first time it's happened."

"...well I fucking hate that." Tommy barked with laughter, which was better than the quiet sniffles. Dream chuckled with him.

"Thanks, Tommy. Tell Wilbur I say hi."

"Will do. Have a great hospital bed birthday, big man!"

---

**dream** @dreamwastaken

nothing better than turning 22 while getting your cells withdrawn for CAR T-cell therapy

**Tubbo** @TubboLive

Replying to @dreamwastaken

What are t-cells and what do they have to do with cars?

**Eret** @Eret

Replying to @dreamwastaken

They're doing what with your cells???

**BadBoyHalo** @BadBoyHalo

Replying to @dreamwastaken

Happy Hospital Bed Birthday!

**dream** @dreamwastaken

Replying to @BadBoyHalo and @dreamwastaken

hospital bed birthdays are the best birthdays

---

It turned out, sneaking a PC setup into a hospital was easier than sneaking in the feral boys.

Quackity and Sapnap wouldn't stop cracking jokes, and Karl kept laughing at said jokes. George and Dream would snap at them to cut it out, but it just made them joke more. It was an endless headache.

Don't get him wrong, Dream was happy Quackity and Karl were here. He loved getting to meet his friends, even if his circumstances and appearance were less than ideal. Quackity immediately squeezed the life out of Dream. About a million buff! Quackity jokes came to Dream's mind, but then he realized it was because he was a walking toothpick now. Karl joked about their matching haircuts (though it's been over two weeks since the charity stream, and most of their buzz cuts were visibly growing). They were crazy physically affectionate; he expected it from Karl, but Quackity was a surprise. Then again, George and Sapnap were excessively touchy when it came to him too. Dream guessed it was a coping mechanism, showing their support while also assuring themselves that he was okay, he was still here, he was warm and breathing. He couldn't fault them for that. In fact, he quite enjoyed the affection.

But by god, were they loud.

"Can you cut it out already? Dameon is supposed to be on his way, and I don't want the surprise to be ruined because he could hear you bickering from down the hall," Dream snapped. Sapnap, Quackity, and Karl froze, looking like scolded children.

"Sorry, Dream," Karl whispered, giving him a hug. Dream sighed.

They stood in the hospital courtyard, trying to hide behind a giant backdrop. The whole area was decorated like a proper Minecraft-themed party. All of Dameon's nurses and doctors were invited, along with all of Dameon's family.

Just because he knew there would be a lot of phones and cameras, Dream was once again wearing the sunglasses, mask, and beanie disguise. Quackity said it made him look like a kpop idol.

"C'mon, baby, let's get some fresh air," Mrs. Simmons' voice was distant. They looked at each other, waiting for the code phrase.

"But I'm tired- huh? What...What's going on?"

"Dameon, did you really forget your own party?" Mr. Simmons teased. This was when Dameon's family would come out. He heard Dameon gasp.

"Paige! Lexi! Ty!"

There were stomping footprints and crying as the family rushed to reunite. Dream's heart soared and ached at the same time; it was so bittersweet it hurt.

"You guys did all of this? For me?"

"Of course, baby. You never got to make your wish, so we worked something out instead."

Go time. Dream walked out first, followed by Sapnap. Dameon turned around looked over immediately. His decreasing health made it difficult for him to stand or walk because it took so much energy, but he popped up when he saw them. The excitement on his face quickly morphed into shock when George, Quackity, and Karl walked out.

Dameon just started screeching.

Once his mom got Dameon to calm down, the boy stumbled over to hug the streamers. Karl giggled and cooed, picking Dameon off the ground when he hugged him. Quackity complimented Dameon's LAFD beanie, and Dameon

demanded they get a picture together immediately. When he turned to George, he paused to stare in awe before turning to his family.

"Mama! This is Clay's boyfriend!"

"NO!" Dream and George shouted while his friends howled with laughter. Mrs. Simmons smirked and raised her eyebrows.

"Nice to meet you, George."

Dream covered his already hidden face with his hands. This was more mortifying than the time George texted his mother.

And then Dameon turned to him. He wasn't wearing a mask since he was outside, and Dream realized this was the first time he's seen Dameon without one. He had the toothiest smile, a small gap between his two front teeth. Dream wished he looked this adorable when he was a child.

"Hey buddy. Sorry I couldn't get the whole SMP," he said, kneeling down so he and Dameon were eye level. Tears pooled in Dameon's eyes, and he fell into Dream's awaiting arms.

"You're the best person in the whole world," Dameon whispered, and Dream chuckled.

"I think that's reserved for your mama. I'll take second best, though."

"I know it's because we're sick but...I'm glad I got to meet you," Dameon confessed, pulling out of the hug. Dream's heart clenched so hard it caused him physical pain.

"Me too, buddy."



"Group picture time!" Karl cried, holding up his phone for a selfie. Dream grabbed the premade white smiley face paper attached to a stick and held it over his face while they posed, Dameon clinging to his side. Then he took another one without his mask or sunglasses for Mrs. Simmons.

"I haven't seen him have this much energy in weeks," Mr. Simmons commented, watching Dameon and his siblings play with George, Karl, Sapnap, and Quackity. Apparently, Dameon's older sister, Lexi, was a big fan too, and her parents kept the feral boys a surprise from all of them.

"I'm glad he's happy. This isn't StreamerCon, but..." Dream shrugged. Mrs. Simmons hugged him tightly.

"For him, this is even better than that. I promise."

---

**karl!** @honkkarl

Feral Boys meetup feat. Day and his family!

[picture attached]

**Niki** @Nihaachu

Replying to @honkkarl

I love this!! Hi Day!!!

**Technoblade** @Technothepig

Replying to @honkkarl

the only child i would admit defeat to

**Young Buck** @sjdjonxruo

Replying to @honkkarl

Day is so tiny, I can't

**JodieFan** @jodienotfoundd

Replying to @honkkarl

DAY HUGGING DREAM IM CRYING

---

"It's real! It's happening! Feral Boys stream!"

"In this video, we coded it so that I got cancer and met my friends--"

"DREAM!"

"What?"

It was so loud. So chaotic. They were sitting in Sapnap's room. The camera was on, and Dream sat off to the side. They marked off an area with tape so he wouldn't accidentally step out on camera. Everyone was shouting the whole time. There wasn't a plan for the stream; at some point, someone brought a guitar (who owned a guitar?), and all of the sudden they were eating pizza and cake. He didn't bother trying to keep up.

"Chat wants to know what Dream looks like. Guys, I'm telling you, Dream is the most handsome bald man I've ever met. I'm being serious," Karl said. Dream's face burned; he hated compliments.

"Even if he barely has any eyebrows," Quackity said. "I honestly had no idea eyebrows fall out from chemo."

Dream snorted. "Well, duh. It doesn't just attack the hair on your head. It does take longer for the rest of the body hair to fall out, for some reason. Don't worry, though, they'll grow back like normal."

"Should we do another charity stream but shave off our eyebrows instead?" George suggested, earning very mixed opinions from everyone in the room and chat.

"YOU WON'T! YOU WON'T!" Dream challenged while Karl covered his eyebrows to protect them.

"Chat is asking about Day — no, actually, Day is the cutest fucking kid in the world. I've never met someone that happy and good at making people smile, and I'm sitting next to Karl Jacobs right now," Quackity answered.

"He's a really good kid," Dream agreed, a bit more reserved as he thought about his unofficial little brother.

"He is basically walking positivity and optimism, even on the hard days. It's really amazing to see, especially given everything he's going through," Sapnap added.

Karl sniffled. "His family is so cool too. Mama Day called me baby and I think I started crying."

"The world does not deserve Day," George declared, and Dream shouted to agree. Dameon was way too good for this world.

And maybe that's why he had to go too soon.

---

The phone call came late at night.

Dream was in his room, editing a video. Sapnap and George were in their rooms streaming. He had been on Twitter earlier, scrolling through all the fanart of the Day and the feral boys meetup from a week and a half before.

His phone rang, and when he saw who was calling, he picked up immediately. It was a short and tense call. The moment Dream hung up, he ran out of his room and banged on Sapnap's door. It was loud and aggressive, but he needed Sapnap to know it was an emergency. Seconds later, the door opened, and Sapnap looked confused.

"Dude, what's wrong?"

"You're muted, right?"

"Yeah, why?"

"It's Dameon."

The drive to the hospital was the worst in his life. It felt like it took hours, yet everything blurred together. No one said a word, too stressed to talk. Before they were fully parked, Dream pulled off his seatbelt and jumped out of the car. He ignored his friend's cries and booked it for the hospital. The nurse at the desk looked relieved to see him, and she pointed down the hall.

"He's been down all day. The doctor checked and found organ failure caused by toxicity from the chemotherapy. They don't think he has long left."

Fuck everything.

Dream ran down the hall. By the time he made it to Dameon's room, he was out of breath and exhausted. When he saw Dameon, he forgot how to breathe altogether.

Dameon was always small. That was one of the first things Dream noticed about him. But in that big white bed, laying on his back, he looked fucking tiny. His expression was serene, peaceful, like he was just sleeping. A morphine drip was attached to his arm, allowing him to be that peaceful this close to death.

Oh, god, Dameon was dying.

His family surrounded him. His mom sat by his head, his dad by his feet, and his siblings held his hands. They were all crying. Dream probably should be crying, but he was too shocked, too busy processing that this was actually happening to cry.

"Clay," Mrs. Simmons croaked, holding out her hand and beckoning him closer. "I'm glad you got here. I was so worried..."

Dream nodded, feeling jittery. "Me too. Can he...has he woken up at all?"

Mrs. Simmons shook her head. "We wanted to make it easy for him. The doctor said he was in a lot of pain. I didn't..."

Her sobs cut her off. Dream approached the bed, lightly brushing Dameon's arm.

"He said he might still be able to hear us," Mr. Simmons explained, voice thick and cracking. "We were...We went around and told him how pr-proud we are of him. If you want, you can..."

Dream nodded, the emotions starting to catch up to him. He felt them stirring in his chest, making his heart stutter. He looked down at the small face, at the breathing tube keeping his lungs working. Dameon's expression was so serene it hurt. Sapnap and George arrived, looking just as out of breath. The Simmons beckoned them in, and they stood behind Dream, gripping his shoulders.

"Do...Do you want to go first, Dream?" Sapnap asked. Dream shook his head. His thoughts were everywhere and nowhere. He couldn't even reply with words, much less communicate everything he wanted to...

"I can go," George offered, squeezing Dream's arm. "Dameon, from the moment we met, I was so happy to know Dream had someone like you. I've never met someone as happy and loving as you. Despite everything, you loved life, and it made me start to appreciate it so much more too. I could never stop smiling around you. No one could. I'm honored to have you as a fan and a little brother to my best friend. Thanks, little Day."

It was concise but genuine. Dream wanted to his friends a hug, give them the comfort they were providing him, but Dream could only stare at the hospital bed.

Sapnap went next. "When you first met me, you gave me the biggest hug, and I couldn't stop thinking about how unfair all of this was. How someone like you had to go through bullshit like this. Yet you never let it get you down. I don't think you understand what an impact you had on everyone, especially Dream. Even before I knew about you, I saw a change in him. He was less upset after appointments, less stressed. I've been so worried about him, but I didn't need to worry so much because of you. I wish more of the world got to know you. I wish...I wish we weren't here right now, but I'm glad I got to meet you. You're the greatest kid in the world."

It was Dream's turn. He understood that. Everyone was waiting for him to speak. He wanted to speak, but he just...couldn't. His heart was pounding, his breathing was too quick. He couldn't look away from Dameon's face. Sapnap pulled him into a hug from behind, and Dream gasped.

"It's okay, Dream, just take a deep breath..." Mrs. Simmons said, grabbing his hand. He turned to look at the mother. Her eyes were so full of love, just like

Dameon. Dream didn't want to lose this. He didn't want to lose the kid he's grown to see as a little brother, or the family that proudly claimed him as their own. Even before he met Dameon, he knew the kid wasn't going to make it. He should be prepared for this. Why was it so hard to comprehend now that it was happening?

"I..." he took a deep breath. Just let it all out. "The first time I saw you, it freaked me out how much I saw myself in you. I was your age the first time I got diagnosed, and it shook me up. But then I met you and realized just how different you were. You held this light, this optimism that I've never had. I don't think you understand how easy you made it for me. I went from hating my appointments, hating my diagnosis and wanting to hide it, to embracing it. Appointments stopped sucking because you were always there to make me smile. You made everyone happier, made everyone better."

Hot, sticky tears slipped down his cheeks and onto the sheets. Dream ignored them and continued on. "You inspired me, Dameon. Telling the fans, that was all because of you. For me, my cancer was something to hide, but you made me see otherwise. You made me realize that it's okay to admit that you're sick, it's okay to be hurting, and it's okay to ask for others to help you." George and Sapnap's grip tightened. "I've spent all this time thinking that I should protect others by isolating myself, but you...you took your illness and used it to heal others. And that's why you're so amazing, Dameon."

His breath hitched, and George rubbed soothing circles in his back. It was hard to speak through his tears, but he had to finish. "I know...I know that you don't want to go. I know how that feels. You shouldn't have to go. You deserved so much more in life, and I'm sorry you didn't get that. I'm so, so sorry. But I want you to know that we won't forget you, and we're so damn proud of everything you've done. You've done so much, touched so many. You changed me, Dameon. You impacted me more than I can explain. So I want you to know...that it's okay. It's okay if you go. We'll be okay."

Sobs filled the room. Everyone was crying; everyone but little Dameon, who lied there so peacefully, surrounded by those who loved him.

"We love you, baby," Mrs. Simmons said, kissing Dameon's forehead. "It's time for you to go home now. We'll meet you in heaven soon, baby."

Dream wasn't very religious, but he closed his eyes and prayed to whatever was out there, if anything. Prayed that, if there was an afterlife, it would treat Dameon a whole lot fucking better than this life did.

Who knows. Maybe Dream will join him soon and find out.

The flatline tone rang out, making everyone jump. Dream felt the world fall out from underneath him. Like a pit opening up and swallowing him whole. He...He was actually gone. He was dead. Actually dead. He was never waking up. He would never see Dameon smile again or get to watch streams together again. Never hear his giggle, never get pestered to spoil lore, never get another hug. It was over. He was gone. Dream's hope was gone.

Dameon was dead.

Mrs. Simmons cried and hugged her boy while Mr. Simmons pulled the sobbing children in for a hug. Dream...just felt numb. He knew Sapnap and George were holding him, comforting him, but he felt...removed. Dissociated. Like he was watching this from a distance, not in the present; like reliving an old memory.

Dameon's expression never changed. Even in death, he looked just as peaceful as in sleep.

Dream was vaguely aware of the pounding of his heart, of the darkness creeping in his vision. He felt a rush, like a cold wave and a twist in his stomach that left his fingers tingling. He knew this feeling from back then. His body went



completely numb. Even when the world started to spin and tilt, all he could see was Dameon's face.

And then it was dark.

## Notes:

Just killed a child, feeling good.

Here's my Twitter. Just let it out. I'm so sorry.

BUT ALSO DONT HURT ME, I HAVE AN EXPLANATION:

Dameon's character is modeled to be Dream's fears personified, and in turn, force him to face them. Dream hates thinking back on being a cancer kid, but every time he saw Dameon, he saw himself. It made him accept that part of him more. Dream is scared of opening up and letting others in about his illness, Dameon showed him that doing that could be a positive thing. Dream doesn't want to burden others, Dameon taught him to accept help. But above all, Dream is terrified of dying young, which is why it was so important to the storyline that Dameon died. It's going to force Dream and everyone around him to genuinely confront that possibility.

Believe me, I did NOT want to kill Dameon, I sat on this chapter ending for so long. I just played "I Lost a Friend" by FINNEAS and sobbed the entire time I wrote it.

## Chapter 9

### Notes:

TW! Death-related discussions and goodbye messages!

The Twitch streamer mentioned in this chapter is an OC. KelsyGamesXO was made up. Please don't go sending hate to anyone named Kelsy LMAO.

(See the end of the chapter for more notes.)

Chapter Text

Went undiagnosed and untreated

When they finally found it told em

It too far along and he couldn't beat it

But he couldn't see it

Dream woke up in a hospital bed. A part of him wished he never woke up. A part of him wished he was dead. He would die in a heartbeat if it meant Dameon would live. But life didn't work that way. Dameon was already dead,

and Dream was alive, and the world was still moving — moving on from the loss.

Dream wasn't moving. He wasn't going anywhere.

Unfortunately, that wasn't just a metaphor.

"The level of distress you experienced last night put a bad strain on your body," Dr. Brett explained. "Your blood pressure dropped to dangerous levels, to the point where you started seizing. I want to keep you here to monitor you. Your body is weak right now, which puts you at higher risk for infection. We don't need to do a blood transfusion yet, but I want you here in case we do. I'm also scheduling you to meet with the hospital psychologist—" Dream tried to protest, but Dr. Brett cut him off, "-since the stress of a loss, especially someone so young, is very psychologically damaging. You need to be strong physically and mentally if we're going to get through this, Clay. So please, just work with us here."

Dream was tempted to tell her to kindly fuck off and let him leave this hospital. He couldn't be here right now, not so close to Dameon's room, not so close to the place he died. He couldn't be here knowing that the little ball of sunshine wasn't going to burst into his room at any second and talk about Tubbo's latest stream. He couldn't do this when it felt like his world was falling apart. But then again, it's not like being home would be any better. He'd probably just lock himself in his room and never come out.

"Can I get transferred to another floor?" Dream croaked. His voice was gross and scratchy. "I- I can't..."

Dr. Brett nodded. She understood. She knew Dameon too. "I'll see what I can arrange."

They got him resettled on the floor above. All Dream had on him was his phone. Sapnap and George ran home to pack him a bag. They didn't know how long he was going to be here, but it was at least a week. It was kind of nice, like a mandatory break from social media but without the guilt because it was doctor's orders. He wondered if he should make a post announcing his break to Twitter again. People would be worried, but it would be worse if he disappeared and said nothing. When he opened up the app, however, he froze.

What was he going to tell everyone about Day?

The fans loved Day. His friends loved him too. A lot of them expressed wanting to meet him after seeing the meetup with the feral boys. Dream just brushed the comments off; he didn't have the heart to tell them that Dameon didn't have that long. Quackity and Karl got so attached during the meetup, talking about it multiple times on stream after. Fans begged for Day to make a reappearance on stream, and now... God, what should he even say? Could he say anything? He needed to get Mrs. Simmons permission first, but he didn't want to be insensitive and ask when she was still grieving. Dream was still grieving. He wasn't ready to make any kind of post right now.

"Dream?" George and Sapnap were back. They looked exhausted. They collapsed next to his bed, Sapnap latching onto his arm immediately.

"We were so worried," George stressed. "You just collapsed, and then your body started shaking, and we didn't know what to do-"

George's breathing was getting erratic, so Dream reached out to comfort him. George's whole body shuddered and collapsed into his chair.

"Mrs. Simmons said to reach out. She's worried about you," Sapnap explained. Dream's heart dropped at the mention of Dameon's family.

"Do they... Do you know if they've made funeral plans yet?" he said. His friends shook their heads.

At some point, he fell asleep. He was so tired, he didn't mean to fall asleep, but he couldn't stop it. When he woke up, he had a daily check-in message from Bad, and a missed call from Mrs. Simmons. Still a little delirious from sleep, he called her back.

"Hi, baby, how are you feeling?" she asked. Dream's heart ached to hear her exhausted, broken voice. It lacked the playful joy he was used to.

"I'm okay," he said, keeping his voice low for George and Sapnap, who were both passed out. "How are you? Your family?"

"We're going through it. It's been a rough day, that's for sure," she said. "The doctors said they're keeping you there?"

"Yeah. They want to monitor my condition."

"I see. I'm sorry. I should've known better than to put you in such a distressing situation."

"No, no. I'm glad I got to be there. I wanted to be there," Dream assured her. Mrs. Simmons hummed.

"We're having the funeral later this week. If the doctor lets you leave, you and your family are invited. George and Sapnap too."

"Thank you. I will definitely try to be there." He took a deep breath. "I was actually wanting to ask...do you mind if I tell my other friends? Like the ones he streamed with? Or, if you don't mind...I was thinking about making a post dedicated to his life. He...he impacted a lot of people, as you know." The other end of the line was silent, and Dream mentally cursed. He knew it was too soon.

"It's okay if you're not comfortable. There's a lot of scary people on the internet and a lot of them like to pay attention to me, unfortunately."

A loud snuffle cut Dream off. "No, no. I would...I would love that, actually. I can send some photos from before his diagnosis, as well as some photos I have of you two together."

"Yes, please. Thank you."

"Okay, baby. I need to go, but you keep in touch. I want to know how you're feeling and that you're recovering well, okay?"

Dream agreed, promising to update her at least once a week. And then he opened up his Twitter drafts.

---

**Dream** @Dream

I feel like I'm trapped in a nightmare. Rest In Peace, buddy. You got me through my treatments, and I don't know what I'm going to do without you. You had so much worth sharing with the world. I'm honored you got to share it with me. Find peace in the sunset, little Day. #FuckCancer

[photos: One of Dameon pre-diagnosis, happy and smiling after he unboxed his Minecraft sword at Christmas. A candid picture of Dameon and Dream sitting on a hospital bed watching a stream together, Dream's face blocked out with a smiley face sticker. Another picture of them hugging with Dream's hood pulled up and back turned to the camera.]

**Tommyinnit** @tommyinnit

Replying to @Dream

FUCK. FUCK. FUCK. CANCER. FUCKING FUCK.

**karl!** @honkkarl

Replying to @Dream

I've been crying all day. I'm so happy I got to meet Day. A life gone too soon.

**Quackity** @Quackity

Replying to @Dream

I cannot properly say how upset and devastated I am right now. Day deserved fucking better #FuckCancer

**Ph1LzA** @Ph1LzA

Replying to @Dream

Please give Day's family my absolute best. He was such an amazing kid, and I'm so sad to hear he's passed. Rest in peace, Day

## **Trending**

1 . Trending

### **REST IN PEACE DAY**

Dream announces that MCYT fan who appeared on stream, Day, has lost his fight to acute lymphoblastic leukemia

2 . Football . Trending

## **Seahawks**

### 3. Trending

## **#FuckCancer**

**barbra** @babswastaken

day lost his fight to cancer and he was just a kid NO ONE TALK TO ME IM NOT OK

**Beloved Boo** @ranboomylove

I have been crying all fucking night, I can't stop, I hope Dream is ok, I hope Day's family is ok, #FUCKCANCER

**kay smiles** @kayleemil3

Rest in Peace, Day. Reminder to be thoughtful to Day's family and Dream at this time, I know personally how this feels. I'm so sorry for your loss, Mama Day.

---

With the announcement of Day's death, it was understood without formality that Dream was taking a break. After excessive begging, Dr. Brett allowed him to leave the hospital just for Dameon's funeral, with strict orders to return immediately. It was a spiritual and intimate service, filled with Dameon's family members and friends from church and school. The pastor led them in song and prayer. There was an open casket at the church first, and Dream almost collapsed upon seeing Dameon's body again.



They were burying him in his beanie. A small, child suit and a lime green Dream beanie. It looked horrendous, yet so perfectly Dameon. He remembered that beanie; Dameon wore it the day they met. Dream bawled, and he wasn't alone. There was hardly a dry eye in the church. Dream didn't stop crying. Even after the casket was lowered to the ground, tears streamed down his face like waterfalls. His mother, after tightly squeezing and comforting Mrs. Simmons — "I'm so sorry for your loss. Thank you for taking care of my boy." — led him back to the car. He squeezed between George and Sapnap and dozed leaning against them. No words were exchanged the entire ride back to the hospital.

The psychologist came to check on him again the next day. Dr. Sills was a nice woman, sympathetic and professional. She helped a lot, actually. Assured him that the emotions he was feeling were valid and normal, and he shouldn't be ashamed of them.

"You said you saw yourself in Dameon. On top of being a fan, you wanted to be there for him in the way you wished someone was there for you as a kid. It's completely normal to feel guilty in this situation; in a way, you took on the role of Dameon's fairy godfather. You made him happy, made his ultimate wishes come true, but you couldn't stop his death. That isn't your fault. You did so much for Dameon, and you made his last few months of life the best they could be. You did all you could, Clay."

She also suggested for Dream to write letters — to himself, to his friends, to whoever. It sounded like something out of *Dear Evan Hansen*, but she felt it could help him express his feelings more. "No one even needs to see them. It sounds like you need an outlet for the dark thoughts and insecurities about your future. I think this could really help you."

That evening, after his friends left, Dream sat there with a notebook and a pen. The page was completely blank. Who should he even write to? There were so many options, but at the same time, he didn't want to pick any of them. The

things he actually wanted to say, wanted to write down...those were things he didn't want them to see unless he was dead.

...wait. Maybe that wasn't such a bad idea.

Dameon's death, it made him more stressed about his own future, but above all, it made him worried about what his final message would be. Dameon wasn't conscious when he died. He didn't get a proper goodbye. Dream didn't want that, but he couldn't control that. But maybe, he could still do something about it...

He started broad. **To my fans and everyone who supported me,** — it was hard to write something so depressing, but even harder to express everything he wanted to say in one letter. He kept crossing things out and starting over. This wasn't supposed to be that difficult. He puffed out his cheeks and exhaled, trying to focus his thoughts. Damn his ADHD. Any time he started thinking about one thing, his brain jumped to another thing that had to be added, and suddenly he had a five page essay. This was becoming more rambling than his Pastebin posts.

**...even when you had every reason to believe the worst in me, even when I started to think bad of myself, you guys were there. You were there, reminding me why I did this in the first place, why I loved doing it, why I wanted to keep at it. To keep trying in my career, in my treatments.**

When the fan one was done, he moved onto Sapnap. This one was easier to write, but also a thousand times more painful. He was essentially saying goodbye (hypothetically, of course) to his best friend since he was thirteen. A friend he's known longer than anyone else. Someone who was there for him during the worst points and his life, who acted like his rock and his savior throughout his treatments.

**I can't fucking imagine any of it without you. Being Dream, doing Minecraft, getting through this bullshit relapse — there's nothing important in my life, nothing I care about that you weren't a part of.**

And George. God-fucking-damnit, George.

**If cancer took everything from me, at least life gave me the chance to meet you. To be your friend. You and Sapnap, you bring out the best in me. If getting sick was the price the universe needed for that one in a million chance that we crossed paths, then I'd relapse again and again and again.**

And once he started, he couldn't stop writing. He wrote one for all of his family members, he wrote one for Bad, Tommy, Ant, Sam, Karl, Quackity, Callahan, Punz, Puffy, Wilbur, Techno, Tubbo, Ranboo- it kept going and going, many not very long, but still personal and heartfelt. He decided to give the nearly-full notebook to Ms. Holly. He didn't want to risk his friends finding out and reading it unless — unless that happened. He asked the nurse to hold onto it for him, and either give it back when this was over, or give it to Sapnap if he died.

**I really hope none of you read this. But if you do, know I'm fucking sorry, and I love you. I hope I'll get to see you again.**

---

After a week in the hospital, the doctors ultimately decided to keep him there until he ended chemotherapy in three weeks. Dream didn't like the idea of being stuck here for that long, but he had his gaming laptop that worked well enough. It wasn't the best for streaming and playing games, but at least he still got to interact with his friends and fans.

His first time back online, his friends surprised him. He got a message one day from Bad — which wasn't unusual. Bad messaged him at least once every day

to check on him. However, this time, Bad told him to log onto the SMP, which was unusual. It was probably a lore thing. He logged on, taking note of the large number of people on. He frowned. While they wrote his character to be more minor in the lore the past few months, he would know if they were having a major lore stream. Right?

He joined the VC while Mojang loaded. People were chatting, but it sounded too casual to be lore. "Hello?"

"DREAM!" everyone shouted. Dream winced at turned down the volume.

"Hey. What's going on?"

"Dream, Dream, Dream. Go to these coordinates," Bad said, spamming coordinates in the chat. Dream frowned and changed his mode setting to creative.

"What's going on?"

"You'll see~"

Well. It at least didn't sound like anything bad. That was a minor relief. He typed in the command and the coordinates. His screen flashed and the blocks rendered — and suddenly he was standing in front of a huge, beautiful Minecraft construction. It looked like a palace fashioned after the sun in the sky. His jaw dropped. This had to be the most magnificent build he's seen on the server. When he saw it, he zoomed in on it immediately, his heart freezing. A sign embedded above the palace door in diamond (diamond!) blocks.

'Day's Palace.'

"It was Bad's idea. He teamed up with Foolish to do most of it, but we all helped in a way," Sapnap explained. Dream muted himself so they couldn't hear his sniffing.

"Thank you, guys. Day...he would have loved it."

I wish he could see it for himself.

He took a picture of Day's Palace and sent it to Mrs. Simmons, who replied with excessive heart and crying emojis, along with a very sweet and heartfelt message. He read it aloud to his friends once they stopped streaming (it was much too personal to be read to thousands).

"I cannot express the positive impact you had on my boy. Even before he got to know you all more personally, you were his best friends during this isolating and hard time. You made him feel less lonely, made him excited for even the hard days. He always knew he could count on you guys to stream and make him smile. I know this memorial is not real, but it's better than anything we could ask for. Thank you so much."

Sapnap and George visited often, along with his family. They never said it, but he knew Dameon's death shook them up. They've joked and avoided that 50% statistic for months, but it felt a lot more real now. It was like knowing the end of the world was near, and they were panicking to spend every second they could with him. While he loved getting to see them, it hurt knowing they were so scared. That he was making them scared. He missed the days they spent together and were happy. Only, simply, happy.

---

Two weeks after Dameon's death, Dream was up late, scrolling through Twitter. He felt depressed all day; being in the hospital, along with everything else, was hurting his mental health severely. It was getting harder and harder to leave his

hospital bed, to stream, to smile. The endless crying stopped and now he just felt...numb. He wanted to feel something again.

But when he saw those tweets, he just felt angry. And maybe that's why he acted so brashly, without thinking it through.

**billie is queen** @oblivioncrisismoment

kelsy and her friends think they're so fucking funny when they're literally making fun of cancer patients, wtf

**CafeDeChess** @Cafedechess

TW! Twitch streamer KelsyGamesXO is live rn talking with friends about how they think Dream is faking his cancer diagnosis for views. The whole stream is insensitive and triggering, so please be careful!

**SilkyDraws** @silkydrawsstuff

KelsyGamesXO on stream "I bet that cancer kid had no clue who Dream was and they're just saying he was a fan for views" and her friend literally said, "well, he's fucking dead now so oh well" WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THESE PEOPLE

Dream was vaguely aware of KelsyGamesXO. She's been a Twitch streamer for a while, and she tended to jump around with her content so she wasn't known for anything — except being a bitch for no reason. She loved pulling people into drama that they had nothing to do with. A few months ago, she had beef with Tommy because she claimed he pulled the 'minor' card to get away with shit. Before that, she tried to cancel Corpse because he was...baiting people? With his voice?

Bullshit, obviously.

Normally, he'd ignore her. He tried to ignore most drama because he knew the moment he gave it attention, it would only blow up more. But this? This was too fresh. This crossed too many lines. What if Dameon's sister saw this and showed Mrs. Simmons? She lost her child two fucking weeks ago, and people thought they could go online and make jokes about his death? To an audience?

No. Not happening. Not tonight. Not ever.

He opened up the Twitch stream. Kelsy sat in her room, talking with a few of her shitty friends on call. Most of the people in chat were his fans defending him, but there were a lot of Kelsy fans and Dream antis cheering her on. They were agreeing with her, claiming that they too believed that it was all for views — both his cancer and the thing with Day. That just made Dream more angry. He typed his comment in the chat.

**dreamwastaken: you really want to keep talking? try saying it to my face**

Chat immediately freaked out when they saw his comment, and he worried Kelsy would miss it. Thankfully, she caught on, and he relished in her silent panic.

Talk shit, get hit, bitch.

"What's wrong, Kels?" Idiot Friend #1 asked.

"Dude, Dream is in my fucking chat right now. He's acting all pissy," Kelsy said with obvious fake confidence.

"What a little bitch baby. Is he mad?" sneered Idiot Friend #2.

"Obviously," Kelsy snorted. "He said I should say it to his face. I'm not afraid, I'll add you to the call."

Dream knew he shouldn't. He's learned from the whole KaceyTron drama that this wasn't going to get anywhere. But his temper got the better of him.

### **dreamwastaken: ok add me**

He had Kelsy's Discord because he sent her a singular message to back off of Tommy, and then he blocked her. As he opened Discord up again, he knew he should leave her blocked. He knew he should go before he dug himself in too deep.

He hit unblock.

"Hi," he greeted plainly. Kelsy and her friends snickered.

"Wow, you sound energized," Idiot #1 said. "Let me guess, you're just 'so tired' from your treatment."

Okay. They weren't even going to fake civilities. "Yeah, it's pretty fucking tiring."

His plan was to be as blunt as possible. Act unbothered, make them sound as antagonistic as possible.

"Oh, I'm sure it's exhausting," Idiot #2 sneered. Dream didn't even bother responding again.

"I have a genuine question, Dream," Kelsy said.

"Yeah?"

"You said you've had cancer before, right?"

"I got diagnosed with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia when I was ten, yes."

Idiot #2 muttered something about big words. Dream ignored it.



"So did you almost die then too?"

"Excuse me?"

"I just want to know. I mean you keep talking about how there's a chance you might die, oh it's a coin flip — I mean, you're practically a pro. I just want to know if you had practice beforehand or not."

"You said you got a Make-A-Wish trip, but I read online that kids with leukemia rarely get a Make-A-Wish because most people don't die," Idiot #1 baited. "So either you're lying about your trip, or you faked being sick. Which one was it?"

Dream was at a loss. "If you really read like you claim, then you wouldn't be asking me that question."

He thought it was a pretty good comeback, and his fans in chat seemed to agree. Kelsy and her friends, however, just got more triggered.

"Oh, please. Just admit you're milking it for views. You got worried that you were becoming irrelevant, because you were—" Dream laughed at the sheer absurdity. Irrelevant? When he got diagnosed, he just hit 22 million subscribers on YouTube. Irrelevant? "-so you decided to play your cancer card to get sympathy views. That's the only reason anyone watches you now, you know. Because they feel bad for you."

"I wouldn't be surprised if you were pretending to relapse at all," Idiot #1 said.

Dream has never hated someone more.

"Faking it? Are you fucking kidding me?"

"Yeah. I mean, how do we even know when you're too big of a coward to show your face."

"So terminally ill people have to put their disease on blast for everyone to see in order for it to be real? If you don't see every process of their treatment, don't watch them literally wither away on chemo, or suffer through surgery, then they're faking it, right? Do you hear yourself?"

"Wouldn't be the first time you faked things. Isn't that your whole brand?" Idiot #2 said.

"I never faked that, and I'm not fucking faking this. I don't know what you want me to tell you."

"Okay, but we all know that Day shit was total bullshit," Kelsy snapped, and Dream's heartbeat spiked. It was getting harder to breathe. "You want us to believe that you relapse and just happen to run into a little kid with the same cancer as you that is also a fan? And you two just happen to become 'best friends' to the point where you invite him on stream and post about it on Twitter? Pack it up with the cancer sob stories, John Green. How gullible do you think we are?"

"Don't. Talk about Day like that. Don't fucking talk about him at all."

The group hesitated at his dangerous tone, and Dream thought he finally shut them up.

But then Kelsy opened her big mouth.

"I can talk about him all I want. You're the one that put him out on social media for hype. You were the one that decided to use him to get attention from fans, and now you're out of content because he's dead--"

"SHUT UP! SHUT UP, SHUT UP, SHUT UP!"

His control was gone. All he had left was rage.

"You make me sick! Day was a fucking child! He was a literal angel despite being dealt shit in life! I never lied about him, ask anyone else. You guys are the sick fucks that are invalidating a dead child's life, bringing his family nothing but more pain, and you're the one doing it for clout! We know you don't pull views like this, Kelsy! You're exploiting this situation, you're exploiting Day, and I'm not going to let it fucking slide-"

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

"Shit," Dream reached for his monitor, trying to get it to shut up. It was going off because his vitals were crashing again. Dream took deep breaths, trying to get everything over control. That nauseous, blackening rush from low blood pressure (he didn't even realize he was about to blackout, he was that angry) slowly eeped away.

"What the fuck is that?" Idiot #2 asked. Dream waited until his heart rate was under control and the beeping stopped before he replied.

"My patient monitor. Apparently, it thought I was crashing again."

"What?"

"Yeah. Because I'm fucking sick and dying, remember? People like me tend to spend a lot of time at hospitals."

Finally, the three idiots were silent. It didn't feel like a win. He knew this was going to be everywhere. 'Dream is in the hospital,' 'Dream is crashing.' He could already see the rumors about him dying.

"I'm going. The nurse will be here any minute to make sure I'm not seizing or dead."

He hung up immediately and buried his face in his hands. Oh, he fucked up. He fucked up big time. He should have just ignored it. He just made everything worse.

He always made everything worse.

---

After such a miserable night, Dream knew he should just go to bed and wait to deal with it in the morning. If he messed with it now, he would only fan the flames. But it didn't feel right, leaving it where it ended. There was still so much he wanted to say, stuff he wanted to clarify. He knew he had dozens of messages from friends, all checking in on him, talking about how they saw the stream, wanting to know if he was okay, if he really was in the hospital. He ignored them all and opened up his own Twitch.

"Hi," he greeted as people joined in to watch. It was past midnight, so he didn't expect a large audience. "Sorry, I'm just using the icon screen. I want to talk and get things off my chest."

He gave it a few minutes to collect his thoughts and let people join. He assured everyone that he was okay; a lot of them saw Kelsy's stream or at least heard about it.

"So," he started. "As I'm sure a lot of you know, things have been...pretty rough, lately. It's been an awful two weeks, and I feel like I'm still waiting for it to get better. I don't know if it will, if I'm being honest. I'm supposed to get off chemotherapy in two weeks, and then it's another month until my T-cell therapy, but I just...I don't know. It's just getting so hard. Like, there's so much to be optimistic about, but I can't even bring myself to hope."

He stared at the wall, ignoring chat and the Discord messages from his friends.

"Sometimes I regret telling everyone. I just got you involved in something that only causes pain. I did it because I wanted to be honest and inspire people like...like Day inspired me. I don't know. I never wanted you guys to know I had cancer. Before I relapsed, I didn't want anyone to know. I didn't even tell my friends about being a cancer kid. I would think of it in different segments in my mind to distance myself. Before cancer and after cancer. Then and now. It helped for a while, until the now stopped looking so different from the then. Coping has been hard, especially since I feel like I have so much to lose this time. I have so many friends. I have you guys. I don't want to lose that. I guess it's kind of ironic, now; I didn't want to lose the people close to me by dying, but my way of coping with my possible death was trying to push them away. I didn't want them to watch me suffer and have to suffer too. Thankfully, I have some damn stubborn friends who talked some sense into me. George and Sapnap especially, but everyone really — they're so fucking great. The support- I can't even put it into words. They've saved me so many times. I owe them so fucking much."

Dream took a deep breath. He honestly had no idea where he was going with this. He was just...talking. Talking about everything that's been on his mind for so long. Everything that's gone unsaid for months, years. Would he regret it later? Probably, but at least it was out there. At least he got to say it now, in case... in case he never got to say anything before the end.

"You know, I read somewhere there's a tendency to talk about disease the same way we talk about war. We need to fight this disease, we will beat COVID, you are battling cancer. We call it the war on AIDs, the war on cancer, you know. It's supposed to be this unifying force, a way to make people take disease seriously and want to stop it. Just like how you want to fight against an enemy, right? But to be honest, it's all bullshit. You don't fight disease, it's not a battle against fucking cancer. Sure, it sounds great for the people who survive — I defeated cancer, I won my battle against this disease — but that's not how it works, you

know? It's not a war with strategy and tactical plans and weaponry and an enemy equal to you. Because if it is, who is my real enemy? My body for accidentally making cancerous cells? All cancer does is hurt you and steal your control, and all you can do is pump your body full of drugs that might hurt you more, or get surgeries with dangerous risks and sometimes little reward.

"I just- I've been seeing it a lot, since Day...passed. And it's not bad, I'm not shaming anyone from using it. It's ingrained in our language. I just want everyone to think about it. I see people making these posts about how 'he lost his fight to cancer' and...I don't know, but as someone going through something similar, it fucking sucks to see that. He's being remembered as a loser. I know that's not what people mean, but it's what the words are literally saying. It's bullshit. Day didn't lose, he just died. Maybe I'm being toxic and over-competitive, but I hate it. If I fucking die from this too, just say that it killed me. Don't pretend like I stood a chance and I just didn't fight hard enough. When it comes to this sort of thing, sometimes you can try everything there is and you still don't survive. That's how diseases work, that's why they fucking suck. So just, please- don't remember me as a fucking loser when I know I've won in life. Cancer or not, I've won, and Day won, and so has everyone who's died or dying. Don't invalidate the lives we lived by focusing on the moment we didn't — on the thing that killed us."

He risked a glance at chat and saw an endless stream of concerned messages. God, he sounded really fucking depressing right now, huh? He scrambled to backtrack. "I'm not fucking giving up. I don't want to...I don't want this disease to kill me. There's so much I want to do that I haven't and I can't even imagine just losing that — there are so many people I want to meet and hug and see, like, like Bad, or Sam, or Wilbur, or Tommy. I want to let Tommy and Tubbo and Ranboo know how proud I am of them for how much they've accomplished, and say it to their faces. I want people to see me back when it was before this

bullshit, when I was just me, just Dream. Nothing else. That's what I always wanted. I...I still want that. I'm just scared it won't be my choice anymore."

He rubbed his face. "Am I making any sense? I don't know. It's so late and I'm so emotionally drained." He laughed humorlessly. "Oh, George and Sapnap are going to have my head tomorrow. I should go before I sign my death contract too early. Bye, guys, thanks for listening. I know most people won't listen, but please ignore all that bullshit that happened with Kelsy. We all know it was fucked up, but not everyone needs to see it. Thanks, guys."

---

Dream woke up to low whispers. He recognized Sapnap and George's voices immediately, but there was a third voice too. It took Dream a moment to place it, despite it being a voice he heard so often. He cracked his eyes open. Sapnap and George were sitting, but it didn't look like they were on the phone. That was weird. Then why did he hear-

"Oh, I think he's awake!"

Dream eyes shot open. "Bad?"

Bad — real, in the flesh Bad — smiled and hugged him. "Hey, Dream. Surprise."

Dream sputtered. "But- How- W-When did this- How?"

Sapnap snickered. "We've been planning this for a while. He got in late last night. Kind of a good thing, too, given...You know."

Dream's face fell. He buried his head in his hands and collapsed back in his bed, groaning. "Fuck. That wasn't a bad dream."

"Nope," George said, popping the 'p'. An awkward silence settled. Dream kept getting flashes of everything he said, from arguing with Kelsy to his emotional rant on stream. Embarrassment flooded him.

"Are you...Do you want to talk about it?" George asked. "Everyone's talking about how your stream sounded like a goodbye video, and...I kind of agree."

"Oh, and a lot of people online are speculating that you're dead now," added Sapnap.

Dream groaned and didn't move. He knew he was going to regret last night. Why couldn't he have an impulse control?

Bad reached out and touched his arm. "You can tell us, Dream. Please?"

Dream's throat constricted. He shook his head, his breath starting to stutter. He started to cry, but he kept his face covered so his friends wouldn't know.

"Dream. Please don't shut us out right now," Sapnap said, grabbing his hands and pulling them away from his face. Dream glared at the wall to avoid eye contact.

"I...I miss him," Dream confessed, his voice breaking. "I'm so...so fucking mad that he's gone."

George pulled him in for a tight hug. Dream let himself sink into it. "I know, Dream. I know."

"I'm just so exhausted. It's only been four or five months since I started treatment, but I'm so goddamn tired already. I don't remember it feeling like this last time — feeling this bad. It scares me. With everything that happened with Dameon...it just makes that other way of this ending feel so- so real."



Two more sets of arms wrapped around him, and they stayed there, on his bed, absorbing each other's comfort. Dream sighed. He finally got to meet Bad in person, and he's confined to a hospital bed and depressed the whole time. At least he had some energy when he met Quackity and Karl.

"I'm sorry, Bad."

"What?"

"You came all this way to see me, and I'm just a fucking mess."

"Language."

Dream snorted. "We're not even on stream right now."

Bad rolled his eyes. "Yeah, but you're talking bad about yourself, so I don't want to hear it." He rubbed Dream's head. "I didn't come all this way thinking you were going to be fine, you muffin. I knew things were getting rough. I came because I care about you, and I wanted to help."

In the past, Dream hated hearing this. A part of him still did. But now...now he knew to appreciate and accept it. Now he has best friends who call him an idiot when he's on his bullshit and remind him that he's loved. He has... had a little brother figure to show him that it was okay to be weak, and it was okay to let people help you when that's what they want to do. It's been slow coming, but he's been learning to accept that support. Maybe, one day, he would come to desire it and seek it out, just like Dameon did.

"Thank you, Bad," Dream said, giving him another hug. "How long are you going to stay here for?"

“My plan is to stay here until you officially finish this round of chemo. I wanted to stay until your T-cell therapy, but I can’t go on break for that long, unfortunately.”

Dream felt that. Money was always a stress. He was well aware that America’s health system, along with many other things, was fucked up, but making cancer patients pay bills? What the hell kind of logic was that? Did they expect them to successfully keep their day jobs like this? Even if it was possible, it was cruel to ask of them. Thankfully, he could stream to his own schedule, and he was already a millionaire, but those bills hurt — especially since he paid for two. Mrs. Simmons nearly had his head, but Dream was willing to die by her hands if it meant covering this for their family. He knew they were tight for money. They just lost their son. They didn’t need anything else to worry about, and Dream could afford it.

“The moment you get off chemo, we’re having a fucking party,” Sappnap declared. Dream snorted, but he had no objections. It actually sounded really nice. He wouldn’t be magically recovered the day he got off, obviously, but the symbolic celebration would help make the accomplishment more meaningful. If everything went well, he would get off, and then he had a month until his T-cell therapy, and then maybe, just maybe, he would make it through this in remission until the end.

His phone rang, and Dream cringed. He did not want to look at it; he knew he would probably have a DM from every person on his contacts, not to mention how many messages his friends would send. And Twitter...he might just delete it, that’s how little he wanted to look at Twitter right now. He risked a glance at his phone, his stomach twisting at the sheer number of notifications. The ones from his family were the easiest to respond to...which was comparable to being the easiest 100+ pound weight to lift. Everyone was so worried for him, as they should be; he was worried for himself.

And to make matters worse, Tommy was calling.

"You should answer him," Bad encouraged. "He's been really worried. Everyone is. They've all been calling you, Sapnap, and George all day. I think this is the tenth time Tommy's called today."

It was the eighth, actually. Karl called six times, Tubbo three, Wilbur four, Sam twice. Pretty much everyone he was closest to called him at least once.

Just before the call could go to voicemail, Dream picked up. "Tommy?"

"DREAM!" he could hear the teen scrambling on the other end. "You-You...I, uh..."

Sapnap, Bad, and George turned away and busied themselves on their phones, giving Dream some semblance of privacy.

"Hey, I'm sorry I missed your call," Dream said lamely, because it was easier to pretend this was a normal phone call.

"Yeah, it's alright..." Awkward tension settled in the call. Tommy cleared his throat. "How, uh, how are you? You sound better than you, um, did last night."

Dream winced. "Right. I am. Feeling better, I mean. Last night was...it was really rough. I'm sorry you had to hear that, I'm sure it was triggering. I'm sorry."

"Don't apologize, Dream," Tommy scolded, and Dream snorted. This felt a bit reversed. "It's been a rough time. My parents keep telling me they're concerned because I'm acting weird, I guess. It's hard to be happy and normal with everything going on, I guess. You know."

"Yeah." Deep guilt settled in Dream's stomach. God, Tommy was only seventeen. How badly were Dream's problems wrecking his mental health?

"I keep asking them to let me buy a last-minute flight to America but they won't let me. Not even when I say Tubbo and Wilbur will come too! They want me to wait until StreamerCon but that's months away! They ask me why I'm down all the time, yet they still won't let me. Not that I'm like. Emotional or crying. Obviously. It's just weird now."

Dream couldn't help but laugh. "It's okay if you cry sometimes, Tommy. No one's going to think anything less of you. I think I've cried at least once every other day since I relapsed."

"It's true!" Sapnap added before going back to his phone.

Tommy wheezed. "Shit, Dream."

"I'm sure you'll make it out here soon enough, Tommy. I'm not going anywhere."

Lie. You can't control that.

"I fucking hope so. I, uh, I know I joke a lot but, um. I want you to know that you really are like a brother to me. You help me so much and I really look up to you." Tommy laughed, but Dream could hear the thick emotion behind it. "Shit. I wanted to say that in person, but I guess your stream last night has me stressed that I won't- yeah. I don't know. I'm sorry."

Dream's chest tightened. It felt hard to breathe. "Thank you, Tommy. I'm proud of you, you know that, right?"

"Yeah..." Tommy said quietly before clearing his voice and returning to a falsetto version of his boisterous self. "I told Kelsy to fuck off, by the way. She's a total bitch. She got banned on Twitch, so fucking ha."

They talked for a bit longer, Dream eventually putting the phone on speaker so his friends could join in. Tommy was stunned to hear Bad was there; the teen didn't bother hiding his jealousy. It was a relief, having his friends with him, whether they were in person or not. He skimmed through the messages he got with them. Long rambles addressing his stream, friends trying to reach out to him, all showing him support and love. He could feel their fear and anxiety, and it made him so angry that he caused this — that he made everyone panic. That was what happened when you have an existential panic on stream, though.

He caused this.

He's the one that got the world involved.

He's the one that keeps making it worse.

## Notes:

The part about the militarization of disease was a topic discussed heavily in my medical anthropology class. I brought it up with my mom, who had thyroid cancer, and our conversation went pretty similar to what Dream was saying — just in case anyone was curious. I'd actually love to hear y'all's thoughts on it, I love talking about this; it was one of my favorite in-class discussions ever.

Ahhh, only the two endings left! I will be writing the sad ending first and then finishing with the happy ending. I know some of y'all were planning on skipping the sad ending (which I totally get, that shit HURT ME, I kept crying when I was writing it), so just a heads up, Chapter Ten will be the sad ending.

Also, I put this on my Twitter, but here's the Spotify playlist I made to write this fic!

## Chapter 10: Tails You're Gone

### Notes:

Song for the chapter is The Night We Met by Lord Huron

TW! Major (main) character death!!! This chapter made me cry like a baby multiple times. If you don't think you'll be able to read this chapter but want to know what happens, just comment and I will reply with a summary :)

This is one of two endings, so tune in for the next update for a much happier ending.

(See the end of the chapter for more notes.)

Chapter Text

I had all and then most of you

Some and now none of you

Take me back to the night we met

After his rant on Twitch, Dream found himself going viral beyond the YouTube-Twitter world. It went mainstream, appearing on major news channels and talk shows. People were debating his commentary on the terminology used with cancer, many people voicing support, others saying that he's being too sensitive. More eyes than ever were on him, all while he was at his lowest. It was stressful, humiliating, and overwhelming. He spent almost no time on social media for the two weeks after, and still, his name was a constant trending topic.

He spent the time waiting to get off chemotherapy with his friends. None of them streamed. They limited their notifications to receive messages from friends and family, and that was it. The rest of the time was spent focusing on the present moment, the four of them together. It...wasn't all that thrilling, given that Dream was confined to a hospital the whole time. There's only so much ping-pong and rolling chair racing through the hallways you could do. But at the same time, it was the best two weeks he's had in a while. They talked for hours, joked around with the nurses. They once each made a tower out of plastic utensils and straws and opened voting to the entire floor for whose was the best. Bad won by a landslide — apparently, their Minecraft building skills translated to outside of life. There was an ongoing team effort to beat Ms. Holly in chess. The four of them combined didn't stand a chance against her.

"You have to be a secret grandmaster or something," Dream muttered after their fourth defeat that day. George stared at the chessboard like it held life's secrets while Sapnap and Bad bemoaned their loss. "Because this is some Queen's Gambit level shit."

"Maybe," Ms. Holly said, smirking. She reset the chessboard.

And then the day finally came. His last day at the hospital.

Well, that wasn't fully accurate. He would be back to restart chemotherapy treatment four days before the CAR T-cell therapy, and then maintenance

chemotherapy visits for the next two to three years. But still — he was freed. He finished the intensive, sickness-inducing, hair loss-causing chemotherapy over a week ago, and they kept him for a bit after to monitor him. He was almost on the other side of the mountain. He could see it, feel it.

Dr. Brett stood there, a bit dramatically, reading over his charts. His family and friends stood in the room, waiting for the news.

“Well, Clay. I’m officially clearing you to leave,” she said, her voice getting overshadowed by the whoops and cheers. Sapnap and Drista pulled the strings on the tiny streamers toy, and they went off with a POP!

“Thank god,” Dream muttered, settling back in the bed. He did it. He made it through chemotherapy twice. Twice. He couldn’t believe it. Maybe...maybe it would be okay in the end.

“Congratulations, Clay,” his mom said, kissing his forehead. Dream went to reply, but a burning feeling clogged his throat. He coughed, heavy and aggressive — the kind of cough that made your lungs burn worse, made that urge to cough intensify.

Ms. Holly paused. “I don’t like the sound of that cough.”

Dream waved her off. “It’s just the smoke from the streamers. These probably shouldn’t be allowed inside a hospital, huh?”

After leaving, they went to Dream’s family home for a celebratory dinner. All of his siblings came home, and his mom made his favorite dinner. Between his family and his friends, the house was boisterous and lively. Drista kept trying to fight George, and Sapnap was only egging her on. Bad and his dad were having a long conversation about — honestly, Dream tuned it out a while ago. Dream sat next to his mom, leaning onto her shoulder.



"When did you say you fly back, Darryl?" his mom asked.

"Ah, tomorrow, unfortunately," said Bad. His mother frowned.

"That sucks. Did you guys even get to go anywhere besides visiting the hospital?" his older sister asked.

"Uh...no," Bad admitted, and Dream's heart sank with guilt. Who went on vacation in Orlando and only visited the hospital ward? He knew it was Bad's decision, but Dream still felt sucky. "It's okay, though. I'll just have to come back another time."

"Oh, you better," said Sapnap, smacking Bad's shoulder. The older boy whimpered and smacked Sapnap back.

"You guys should do something tonight. Dream's freed now, so you might as well celebrate it," his little brother said. Dream frowned.

"What would we even do? We can't go to any of the clubs or crowded areas." Being around crowds, especially during a pandemic, was unsafe for people who received intensive chemotherapy. It's why they kept him in the hospital for a bit longer, even after finishing his second phase of chemo.

"You should go for a late-night drive, go see all the lights in the city. At least give him a glimpse of everything," his mom said.

Drista gasped. "Or drive on the beach at night! Like we used to do when you were in high school, with all the windows down and you were speeding—"

"Speeding?" his dad grunted.

"—those were so much fun, you have to do it. And then go to the spot — you know, that spot we found two years ago? Past that fence?"

Dream snorted. "The fence that said no trespassing?"

"Yeah, that one! You have to show it to them, that's like, my favorite place in the whole world."

"While I'm not supporting trespassing," his mom sent him and Drista a look. "I do think it's a good idea to get out. If you're just going for a drive, it shouldn't be too exhausting."

"It sounds fun, I think we should go. I mean, if you feel up to it, Dream...?" Bad said.

A heavy, slightly painful cough was Dream's response at first. His friends and family fell silent, looking stricken. Dream cleared his throat, pushing down the urge to cough more. His throat felt weird, but he ignored it. It was nothing.

"Yeah. Yeah, let's do it," he said.

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They piled into Sapnap's car. Sapnap was driving, while Dream sat in the passenger seat and Bad and George were in the back. It was getting late, already nearing sunset, so they decided to just head directly to the beach. George (somehow) got put in charge of music, and he was torturing them with his bad taste in music.

"You are a menace," Bad said, reaching for the phone, but George kept dodging. "I'd rather you play bad British rap over this."

"Why do you call it that? Why not just bad rap? Does it being American automatically make it better?"

"Obviously," Sapnap snorted. "Now turn it off before you give us ear damage." Sapnap turned off the sound and George sputtered, protesting. He reached forward to turn it up, but Dream slapped his hand away.

"You know what? No. I'm pulling the cancer card. I'm on music. Give me the phone."

Bad sighed. "Thank you, Dream."

They went to one of his favorite beaches. It was a bit of a drive since it was away from all the tourist areas, but it was more private and cars were allowed to drive on the sand. He rolled down his window, breathing in the salty ocean air. It made his throat tickle, and he coughed again. The sun was set, gone behind the dark waves and making way for the night sky. He also loved this beach because it had the best view of the stars. You couldn't see the stars in Orlando. The others rolled their windows down, the music at full volume and wind smacking their faces. Dream stuck his arm out, feeling his hand cut through the air and get pushed around by the wind like a wave. There was a faint ocean spray coating his skin with familiar sticky salt. The sky was deep indigo, making the ocean look black and daunting. He stared, mystified with the looming sea. It was expansive, never-ending. Consistent, but not predictable. There was a danger to it, a calculated and known risk.

Dream knew how that felt.

"This is the best part," Dream said, reaching up and pulling open Sapnap's sunroof. He unbuckled his seatbelt.

"Dream. What are you doing?" Sapnap asked, trying to look at him while also focusing on driving. Dream grinned, brought his feet into his chair, and pulled himself up. The wind almost immediately took off his beanie, and he laughed, desperately catching it before it was too late. Wind against the beanie didn't feel

as good as wind through his hair, sadly. He decided to take it off so it wouldn't blow off again. Salty air smacked him in the face as he opened his arms wide and welcoming, like a bird about to take flight.

"WOOOOOOOO!" He tossed his head back. The stars peered through above him, a massive full moon making its way to the high point in the sky. Since it was September, it wasn't as warm as it was when he and Drista would do this in summer, but Dream found himself enjoying the slight coolness. His focus turned to the constellations — he learned to spot them back then, actually. His dad took him on a trip much like this, except it wasn't to celebrate. His treatments were getting worse, and he just wanted to see the stars again.

"What if that's where we all go in the end? We just become stars," Dream had said, laying in the back of his dad's truck as he took in the expansive night sky.

"That would be pretty cool, huh?" his dad hummed.

"That way, you guys would still get to see me."

"Well, not all of the time. The stars change, you know. But it would be nice to see you for a little bit."

"The stars change?"

"Yup. You see that one over there? That's Scorpio. It's here for half a year in the northern hemisphere, and then it's replaced by Orion when it goes to the south. They switch off, but they always come back."

He could still see Scorpio — it wouldn't be long before it would be replaced by Orion. He wondered if Dameon was up there right now. What constellation would he make? Probably a diamond pickaxe.

Dream snorted at the notion. Tears slipped out. He told himself it was because of the wind. (It wasn't.)

He knew the concept was insane, and he didn't actually believe it, but it was...fun to think about. Comforting. It was easier than thinking that, after death, that was the end. Where would his star end up? Would it be forgotten and hidden around the billions? Would it shine brighter than others but stand alone? Or would it join a constellation? Maybe one day he, George, and Sapnap would make a constellation — the Dream Team, standing together forever.

He reached down, grabbing at George. "Come up here! Come on!"

"You're going to get us killed. Or arrested."

"Don't be a baby, George!"

His friend finally conceded and took off his seatbelt. Dream helped him stand up, scooting over so they'll both fit in the sunroof. George clutched the sides like he was scared he was going to blow away, and Dream laughed.

"Look, Gogy!" He pointed up. George did, and his jaw dropped. "You don't see stars like that in London, huh?"

George smacked his shoulder lightly before gently gripping Dream's arm for balance. Dream placed his arm around George's neck and pulled him in for a tight hug.

For once, he felt completely in the present. No bitterness toward his past, no worrying about his future. His only concern was now, with his best friends under the Florida beach sky. Feeling the wind on his skin, the smell of the sea, the sound of his friends laughing, getting to see them smile — actually, genuinely smile, with no underlying worry or anxiety in their eyes. Right now, that was all that mattered. George admired the stars with awe, his brown eyes blown wide.

Dream admired his best friend; admired the relaxed smile on his face. George had worry lines on his forehead now — they were faint, but there. Dream knew he was the cause. He hugged George a little closer.

"If this goes wrong, just know you'll find me up there," Dream muttered. He was so caught up in the moment, he got disconnected from reality — disconnected from how weird that must have sounded.

"What? In the stars?" said George.

Dream scrambled for an answer that wouldn't make him sound crazy. "Yeah. Since I'm a star."

George snorted. "You're such an idiot."

Dream was about to retort, but a heavy coughing fit answered for him. He had to sit down, it was so painful. His lungs felt like they were flaming up with each hack. Bad gripped his shoulder. "Are you okay, Dream?"

"Ye—" he coughed again, aggressively clearing his throat to get the burning to go away. "Yeah, I'm fine. I think I swallowed a bug."

Sapnap cackled so hard the car swerved, making them all laugh. Dream realized they were getting close to his favorite spot. He directed Sapnap to turn up a hill and up a tiny, bumpy dirt road — the kind that ax murderers hide on, according to Bad. After driving through a grove of low-hanging trees making a tunnel over the road, they came upon a chain-link fence. The car headlights illuminated a bold 'no trespassing' sign.

"Dream. Dream, no," Bad scolded.

"Dream, yes," he said and climbed out the front seat. He ignored his friends as he closed the door and approached the fence.

"Dream!" Sapnap scrambled out after him. "You can't seriously be planning on climbing it! There's barbed wire at the top!"

Ah, how little faith they had in him. What fool did they mistake him for? Dream laughed and approached a part of the fence off the road that was completely covered in vines. He pulled the hanging vines back, revealing a cutout in the fence. His friend's faces fell slack, and Dream wheezed.

"How- How did you even find this?" George gaped.

"A friend showed it back to me in high school. I brought Drista here a couple of times, and she loved it. We came back here a ton since, and we've never gotten caught. I doubt they even check — it's basically one of the worst kept secrets, you know?" He slipped through the opening, careful to not get caught on the wires. "The view really is worth it, though. You'll see."

"I feel like someone is going to come out and kill us," Bad said, glancing around. The three followed him through. "How do we know a wild animal won't jump out and attack us?"

"That's just part of the fun."

"You have a very skewed definition of fun."

They walked down a narrowed, stomped down path. Overgrowth hung down, forcing them to duck, and George tripped on a tree root. They pulled their phone flashlights out after that. Familiarity came to Dream as he walked, and he felt his giddiness grow the closer they got to the spot. They broke through the tree line, and now there was a steep incline hike in front of them.

"You didn't say we were going on a hike," Sapnap complained, flicking a stick out from his sandal. Dream rolled his eyes at his friends' dramatics and kept his eyes focused forward.

This was his favorite part. Walking up the hill, and as you approach the top, the view slowly becomes more visible. More and more of the night sky expands, replacing the grassy field of vision with an immense, sparkling darkness. You stand on the edge of the cliff, and that's all there is in front of you — the never-ending abyss of space. The moon is huge tonight, staring right back at you, illuminating your vision in the darkness. Stars glimmer, leaving no visible holes. Waves crash against the cliff hundreds of feet below, and at that moment, it's like you're at the edge of the world. There's nowhere else to go from here. You've gone as far forward as you are allowed, and all you can do is stand there and take in the expanse of the rest of the world — a world you can no longer attain. But it's okay because the view takes your breath away. It makes all the sneaking and uphill hiking and sticks in your shoe worth it. You're at the edge, so close to falling off, and it's the most beautiful thing in the world.

"Holy shit," Sapnap breathed. His friends stood at his side, taking in the beauty. Dream grinned.

"Worth it, right?"

His friends could only nod. There were no words for something like this. God, he was so glad to be here again. And to have his friend's at his side — it made it even better. He reached out, using his long wingspan to pull them in for a hug. This. Dream couldn't ask for more than this.

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**dream** @dreamwastaken

my favorite view

[picture: Sapnap, George, and Bad sitting on the edge of the cliff, the beautiful night sky behind them]



**BadBoyHalo** @BadBoyHalo

Replying to @dreamwastaken

Love you muffins. Wish I could stay longer 🥺❤️

**Pepper** @beesfortubbo

Replying to @dreamwastaken

MUFFINTEERS!!!! Love you Dream, hope you're feeling better!

**Dream Updates** @dreamupdates

Replying to @dreamwastaken

Dream is back!

**lovejoy supremacy** @yournextfriend

Replying to @dreamwastaken

does this mean dream is out of the hospital?

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Okay. So, maybe the cough wasn't because of the smoke. Or that his throat itched. Or the wind, or that he swallowed a bug, or- anything like that. He woke up the next day feeling about the same. They took Bad to the airport, had a mildly teary goodbye, and went back to the house to crash and catch up on lost sleep from their late night out. They pretty much slept all day, piled on Sapnap's bed together — which was not big enough for three grown men, but they made it work. It was a mess of limbs and a fight for the blankets and pillows, but

Dream had the advantage of being taller and sicker. He could pressure them into getting his way easily.

The next morning — two days after leaving the hospital — he woke up a sweaty mess with an exploding fire in his lungs. He rolled over, hacking into the pillows so they would muffle the sound. It didn't work; George and Sapnap still woke up. Sapnap reached to pat his back, and his hand withdrew when it felt the back sweat.

"Dude, you're drenched."

Dream shook his head. "It's-" cough "It's- body heat- I can't-" His body trembled with each violent cough, and he collapsed miserably against the pillows. A clammy hand pushed its way to his forehead. Dream whimpered and tried to inch away, but the hand followed.

"He's burning up," George said with growing panic. Dream whined in protest. He was fine, they were just overreacting.

Sapnap hummed. "He's shivering too." Was he? He did feel a little chilly, he supposed. He burrowed farther into the blankets, batting away his friend's prying hands.

"We need to get him to the hospital. Dream. Dream, can you hear me?" George patted his cheeks, and Dream groaned. Couldn't they see he's trying to fall asleep? Why weren't they pissing off already? "Do you think you can walk to the car?"

"No car. Need sleep," Dream said. That just made George smack his cheeks more. Dream contemplated biting at his fingers.

"No, no, no sleep right now. We've got to get you in the car. What if Sap and I helped you walk? Will that work?"

Dream purposefully ignored them. Maybe if he did, they'll leave him alone. He just wanted to be alone. He didn't want these hands touching him or grabbing his shoulders or forcing him to sit up-

"Stoooooppp," he groaned. Blood rushed from his head, and a painful stab filled his skull. He felt like shit and it hurt so bad. His lungs burned and each inhale felt harder and harder. Despite how much he tried, his breaths didn't feel like they were enough.

"-think he has COVID? I thought he was vaccinated?"

"I don't know, but whatever it is, it's not good. Damnit, I knew we should've gotten his cough looked at sooner. I knew he was fucking playing it down-"

"Nick. You need to calm down and focus right now. You can freak out later, but Dream needs us now. So you get that arm and help me carry him to the car."

George and Sarnap each wrapped one of his arms around their shoulders, and they dragged Dream out of bed. His whole body screamed in protest, and another coughing fit attacked his body. Everything felt so heavy; his head lulled against his chest. He was dragged the entire way to the car, and they threw him in the backseat without any ceremony. They didn't even bother trying to sit him up or put on a seatbelt. Dream curled on his side, groaning. He couldn't stop fucking coughing but it just made everything hurt more. He sounded like a dying seal. A thick mucus built up in his throat, making it even harder to breathe, and he hacked and hacked and hacked trying to get it out. It felt like he was about to hack out his organs, it hurt so fucking much. He spat the mucus into his palm and stared at the bloody phlegm with mild alarm.

Oh. Shit.

"George. Georgie," he breathed.

"What is it, Dream?" George turned around from the passenger seat while Sapnap backed out the car. Dream held up the red-tinted phlegm, and he could see the blood drain from George's face.

"Sapnap. Fucking step on it."

The normally best driver in the group drove like a madman — blowing through traffic, barreling through yellow lights before they turned red, barely hitting the breaks at stop signs. It was a miracle they didn't get pulled over. They pulled into the hospital in record time. George was on the phone with his doctor the whole time, so they were ready for them when their car pulled up, haphazardly parked with two wheels on the sidewalk. They threw the backseat open, and Dream deliriously tried to help them as they put him in a wheelchair. God, was this what dying felt like?

His heart stopped.

Was...Was he dying right now? Actually dying, not just in a coin flip metaphor?

"Clay? Can you hear me?" That was Ms. Holly's voice. He opened his eyes, not recalling when he closed them. They were pushing him through the hallway. Everything seemed blurry.

"Mmm?"

"Okay, Clay. Your friends said you've been coughing? And you woke up with a fever today?"

"Coughed blood."

"You coughed up blood?"

Dream hummed. He tried to nod, but his head felt too heavy to move. "Phlegm. Bloody phlegm."

It was quiet, but he heard Ms. Holly curse under her breath. Dream tried to look at her, but he stopped, his vision locking on something else.

Dameon's hospital room. The door was open, and there was a small figure in the doorway. A small figure with a Ranboo mask and green Dream beanie. Dameon waved at him, his eyes curling with a smile. Tears blurred Dream's vision and he brushed them away. When he looked again, the doorway was empty.

They set him up in his hospital room. Sapnap and George sat in the corner, both of them glued to their phones as they updated Dream's family. Dr. Brett came in, and Ms. Holly told her all of his symptoms. She asked the doctor if they wanted to do a COVID test.

"We should, just to be cautious, but I don't think it's that. I want to get an X-Ray of his chest and a blood test so we can get a CBC. His oxygen levels are low, so let's get him some extra oxygen," Dr. Brett ordered. George's face pinched, and he started aggressively tapping on his phone. Ms. Holly stabbed the demon nose swab up his nostril, and then attached oxygen nasal tubes. Dream struggled to stay awake as a new set of technicians came in to get the X-Ray of his chest. They left after, so it was just Dream and his friends in the room. Sapnap and George were whispering now.

"Is my mom coming?" he croaked. The nasal tubes helped a bit, making it easier to breathe and talk.

"Yeah. We just got off the phone with her. Your dad is on a business trip and trying to find a flight back asap, but she's headed up here with Drista right now," Sapnap explained. They moved their seats from the corner so they could crowd around Dream's bed instead. George immediately grabbed Dream's hand, squeezing it tight.

"It'll be okay. The doctors will take care of it," he said. Dream didn't bother refuting the obvious lie. George was only saying it to make them feel better. Sapnap was attacking his nails with his teeth while his eyes darted between Dream and the door. They waited there in silence (except for Dream's coughs) until his mom and sister rushed in thirty minutes later. His mom pulled him in for a hug, carefully of the wires and nasal tubes. Her eyes were bloodshot, but she didn't let herself cry as she held him close. Drista hugged him after his mom; she was crying, her body trembling in Dream's arms. God, he knew this had to be triggering for her.

"Hey. You're alright. I'm right here. Right here," he soothed. His sister buried her face in his neck and sobbed. "I'm not going anywhere. I'm right here."

He wanted to just sit there and hold her, possibly until this was over, but another painful cough wracked his body and made Drista pull away. Dr. Brett came in seconds later, her face unreadable.

"Do you know what's wrong? Is it COVID?" his mom asked. The doctor shook her head.

"I've taken a look at your chest x-rays. From the looks of it, you've developed pneumonia, likely pneumocystis pneumonia."

Dream's heart tumbled right out of his chest. It felt even worse than the illness that wracked his body. This was worse than relapsing, worse than being told his prognosis, worse than crashing and being kept at the hospital. Pneumonia...it was a cancer patient's death sentence.

"It appears that you contracted it at the hospital, and somehow it didn't show up on any of our checkup exams. I'm having you moved to the ICU so they can monitor you and administer treatment..." Dr. Brett kept talking, but Dream was long since mentally checked out. His brain felt like a broken wheel — it kept

spinning but nothing was actually moving. He turned to the others. His mom held Drista in her arms, pain and tears on their faces. Sapnap and George, however, looked grim. Did they already know? He suspected it when he saw George Googling earlier. Did they know what this meant, though? Did they understand what was going to happen?

"This can't be happening," Dream muttered once Dr. Brett left. Drista was in hysterics at this point, and his mom took her out of the room to help calm her down. George and Sapnap turned to him.

"What was that?" George asked.

"This isn't happening. It didn't make sense."

Sapnap's face pinched. "Dream--"

"I was getting better. Everything was getting better. I'm off chemo, they let me out of the hospital, I haven't crashed since that night. I- I didn't even need a blood transfusion the whole time I was there. I'm supposed to be getting better, why- why, why am I not getting better, why did she say I have... I can't be sick. Things were supposed to be improving, I was healing. Right?" He coughed, his chest heaving as he tried to get more air. The nasal tubes didn't feel like they were helping much anymore. "I mean, my T-cell treatment is three weeks away. I'm going to make it, right? I have to make it, I need to get into remission in time for the convention. I need to be there, I need to meet everyone still. I haven't...I haven't met our friends yet."

The stricken pain on his friends' faces hurt Dream even more. George looked ashen and statue-like. Sapnap wrung his hands out, turning his skin bright red. They weren't answering him. Why weren't they answering him?

"They're...They're going to take care of you, Dream. They'll treat this and then you can still get your treatment. Okay? Don't even worry about it. You'll be fine."

You'll be fine..." Sapnap tried to assure him. He elbowed George, knocking him back to reality. George jolted and scrambled to answer.

"It's just pneumonia. They can treat pneumonia," he said, but it sounded more like a question. Because that's what the situation was. Everything was up in the air. All of his progress, the chemotherapy, the transfusions, all tossed out the window. It didn't matter anymore; a new disease was here to finish off what cancer already started.

He's known the statistic forever. Infection was the leading cause of death in acute leukemia patients. Pneumonia was the most common infection type. It settled in, attacking the body already weakened and compromised by chemotherapy. It was even worse for Dream, being a relapsed patient. His body was more worn and battered, going through two rounds of chemotherapy in his short life. Leukemia destroyed his immune system twice. The whole situation was textbook.

"Goddamnit, I'm just going to be a statistic," he breathed.

"No. Cut it out, Clay. Don't you dare say that. You're not going to die." Sapnap glared, and this time George elbowed the youngest.

"Now is not the time. Not anymore." George sounded so reserved, so hurt, while Sapnap looked more indignant.

"But we can't just let him--"

"We're not. But right now, we just need to be here."

Dream must be missing something. The pointed looks, the elusive messages, it didn't make any sense to him. But Sapnap seemed to understand, and his shoulders dropped as he adopted a similar expression to George. Dream wanted to reach out and hold them, comfort them, but he felt too tired to even



lift a finger. His whole body felt like shit, even his mind felt heavy and slow. While he wanted to stay awake, spend every moment he could with his friends, he couldn't help it. His eyes fluttered shut, and he drifted off to sleep.

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They moved him to the ICU. Dream fucking hated it. Since the pandemic was still ongoing, he was limited to one visitor. They agreed it should be his mom, but he thought the policy was bullshit. He wanted George and Sapnap and his family here; they deserved to be here. What if he never left the ICU? Was that really going to be the last time he got to see them?

They started administering antibiotics via IV, along with a blood transfusion. They switched him from nasal tubes to an oxygen mask to increase the amount of oxygen they gave him. For over three days, he slipped in and out of a feverish sleep while his mother clutched his hand like a lifeline. He kept dreaming of Dameon. At first, it was old flashes of memories — sitting in a hospital bed together, or playing Minecraft. The most vivid one was a memory of when he flipped the coin, except this time, Dameon caught it instead of Ms. Holly. He held it out for Dream to see with the toothiest grin. The coin was tails-side up.

Then, by around the second day, his dreams shifted to them in a field that looked straight out of the SMP. Dameon was giggling and running circles around Dream, who couldn't move or speak. Dameon never complained. He played by himself, patiently waiting for when Dream could finally join.

The morning of the third day in the ICU, Dream opened his eyes, and he was back at his house, lying in his bed. He sat up instantly. He didn't feel feverish or weak; in fact, he felt better than he has in months. He's never been more confused in his life. Why wasn't he in the hospital anymore? Did he actually get better? When? He couldn't remember leaving the hospital...but how else could

he explain it? He was home. Relief hit like a wave, and he rushed out of his bed. He went straight for the door, wanting to celebrate with his friends. To his shock, they were waiting on him. Sarnap and George stood on the other side of the door, smiling brighter than he's ever seen.

"There you are, dude. We've been wondering when you'd wake up," Sarnap said, pulling on Dream's arm. "Everyone's waiting for you."

"Everyone?" Dream asked.

George chuckled. "Yeah, come see."

They went out to the living room; it was filled with people. People he knew but also didn't. People he's seen a million times, but never like this.

"Big man! You're late!"

"Tommy?" Dream couldn't believe it. It- It was actually Tommy, smiling bright, without a care in the world. He was around Dream's height, just a bit shorter, but his hug was smothering. That hug was soon followed by dozens after — all of his friends, gathered at his house in an unexpected reunion. Dream could hardly breathe, he was so overwhelmed. He wanted to seek them so badly, and they were finally here. Holy shit, they were here.

"What are you guys doing here?" he asked once he made sure he hugged every person in the room.

"We're saying goodbye," Wilbur answered. Dream froze. He scanned the room and realized what looked so off. Their hair — it was back to normal length. Even Niki's was fully grown to her shoulders again. He reached up and found his own hair was back. Tugging on it brought a wave of relief and heartbreak.

"This...This is a dream, isn't it?"

Because of course it was. Of course it wasn't real. He wasn't better. He wasn't getting through this. He was never going to meet these amazing people. Cancer stole that from him. It stole fucking everything.

George grabbed his hand. "Yeah. But it could be real."

"What...What do you mean?"

"We all love and care for you. We all want to be there for you right now. That's real," Karl explained.

"But...But you can't say goodbye if it's all a dream. If it's all in my head."

"Sure we can," Tubbo grinned. "It might not be our words, but that doesn't mean we don't mean it."

Dream stared, making eye contact with every person in the room. This was so stupid. This was literally a fever dream. None of this actually mattered; not to the real people, his real friends. They would probably never get to say goodbye. He was never going to actually hug Tommy, or compare heights with Wilbur and Ranboo. Hell, he was never going to get that proper face reveal in for them or his fans.

But maybe...he could make this moment matter for himself.

"I don't want to leave you guys. You know that, right? I want to stay," he said. His friends smiled back, tears glistening in their eyes.

"Of course we know that, you dumbass," Quackity snorted.

"We never questioned it," said Phil.

Dream nodded, struggling to find the words. How does he express the sheer amount of things he wanted to say? "I just...thank you. Thank you all so much.

Despite...everything, these have been the best two years of my life. Thank you so fucking much for being a part of that. God, I wish I could say more."

He had too much he wanted to say, individuals he wanted to thank specifically. Bad grinned and waved him off. "Don't worry, you will. You wrote those letters, remember? And you've got George and Sapnap and your family there with you. You'll get your proper goodbye."

Bad's words brought warmth and relief to Dream's heart, but then an external coldness rushed over his body. He blinked, and suddenly he was back in the ICU. Something cold and wet was being rubbed over his arms. A wet sponge ran up his arms, legs, and face. Even then, his whole body was a furnace. His lungs felt heavy and thick, and every inhale caused more pain. He could hear his mother talking to the doctors.

"-his body isn't responding to the antibiotics or fever medication at all. His red blood cell count was way too low, and the transfusions aren't enough. The pneumonia is progressing rapidly. It's very likely that he won't make it through the night."

"That- That's it? There's nothing you can do?"

"While his oxygen levels aren't low enough that he's at risk of developing ARDS, his fever keeps rising — it's gone from 101.4 to 103.9 since he's gotten here. None of the medicine is breaking it. Normally, we would administer a ventilator with pneumonia this severe, but that won't do anything for his fever."

"It won't increase his chances? Or make it any less painful? I mean, pneumonia — isn't he drowning in his own lungs? That's what I read online." His mom sounded hysterical. Dream wanted to reassure her, but he couldn't even open his eyes all the way yet, much less speak.

"It sounds scary, but from my experience, pneumonia like this is a fairly painless passing. Patients fall unconscious due to fever and then slowly pass away in their sleep."

That was Ms. Holly's voice. Ms. Holly. He needed to talk to her. He needed- He needed that notebook. He needed...

"Our ICU visitor policy allows more visitors under end-of-life circumstances. We're going to continue to administer treatment, but I encourage you to prepare yourselves. I'm very sorry."

His mother's muffled sobs filled the room, and Dream's eyes finally snapped open. He saw the doctor leave the room, saw Ms. Holly comforting his mom. He groaned, which was the best he could do when his throat felt like it was on fire. The two heard it and rushed to his side.

"Oh, Clay. Oh, sweetie, you're awake," his mother cooed, cupping his cheeks. Dream locked eyes with Ms. Holly.

"Note...Notebook. Do you...?" he rasped. The oxygen mask muffled his voice, but the nurse nodded.

"Yes, of course. Do you want me to go get it?"

Dream shook his head. Not yet. Soon...he could feel it in his soul, it was so soon...but not yet.

Ms. Holly changed out his IV while his mom held his hand. Tears streaked down Dream's feverish skin. He stared numbly at the ceiling. God, this didn't feel real; it was like a bad dream — the worst dream ever. Just when he started to have hope again... He was so close. T-cell therapy, StreamerCon, getting to meet everyone, to hug them and thank them and show them that he did it, that he made it through it twice — it was just so close, and now it was all gone.

He was going to be gone.

He was trapped in a nightmare, and the worst part was, the only way to escape was to go to sleep — and never wake up.

All those times he argued with Sapnap and George, warned them that they were watching him die — the fucking reality was that, deep down, he never actually accepted this possibility. How could he? How could he just accept his death like that; a death so fucking tragic; a death with more loss than just his life? Even after Dameon, he didn't want to believe it. He was scared, he suspected, but he could never accept it. If anything, Dameon made him more determined to live. He wanted to carry on Dameon's legacy, spread his joy and purpose, and let Dameon live on through him.

No one lives forever. But why the fuck couldn't Dream have more time than this?

The others came later that night. Though the fever made it hard for his eyes to focus, he could see the horror on their faces. Their skin was red and blotchy from crying. Still, Dream knew he looked worse. His father went to hug and comfort his mother. Drista collapsed at the foot of his bed, crying too hard to form words. Sapnap grabbed his other hand, but Dream could barely feel his touch. Everything was getting numb, not just his mind.

"Hey, Dream," George whispered. Dream blinked back.

"We, uh, we called Bad. Let him know what's happening. He almost flew out here again, but...he told us to tell you that- that he loves you. He loves you so much and he's so happy he got to be there for you when he could," Sapnap choked out. "We weren't sure if we should tell anyone else yet. We didn't know what you wanted."

Dream's body wanted to go to sleep. Dream's mind wanted to scream.

But most of all, he wanted to hug his friends. One last time.

He stared at them, silently portraying his message through his eyes. George understood it first. He moved from behind Sapnap and collapsed against the hospital bed, pulling Dream in for a tight hug. After that, they all started hugging him, holding him tight. Dream did his best to hug them back, but he could barely get his fingers to twitch. Everyone was crying. When they pulled away, he still yearned to hold them.

He loved them. He loved his friends and family so much, and he could never ask for better. He only wished he could ask for more time with them.

"We wanted to bring Patches, so you could...say goodbye, but it was against ICU policy... So, uh, I grabbed her favorite toy instead," George struggled to speak as he cried, continuously wiping away a stream of tears. He pulled out the small toy — a sparkly pom pom ball from the Dollar Store that she latched on too, despite all the nice and pricier toys he bought her. George gently pressed it in his palm. "We'll take care of her. She'll be okay."

Patches. He wanted Patches so badly. Wanted to feel her nuzzle up against him, or lay on his chest just one last time. He tried to squeeze the pom pom and imagined that she was here.

Drista squeezed his legs. Her face was buried in the blankets, but it did little to muffle her cries. Dream's heart yearned to comfort his baby sister — just one last time. She didn't deserve this. She was too young, she wasn't supposed to see her big brother die already.

"You said- You said you weren't going anywhere. That's what you said. Please, don't go," his sister gasped — pleaded. "Don't go. You can't. You can't."

I don't want to. I don't want to go.

It was uncanny — being so close to death and knowing it. They say your life flashes before your eyes when you're about to die. Dream wasn't sure he would call it that. It was more like you were trying to hold onto every moment, every joy in life. Trying to keep living, to keep making those memories. To experience the exhilarating highs that came whenever the DSMP started becoming so successful, or the intense love and loyalty he felt when he met George and Sapnap in-person for the first time, or the innocent fondness from his favorite family trips as a kid. All those emotions, all those memories came flooding forward. He closed his eyes, relishing in the reminiscion.

"I'm so tired," he said, his voice barely above a whisper. It hurt so much to talk. His lungs felt so shallow. No matter how much he tried to breathe, it felt like he was taking in less and less air. His head was getting foggy, and there was a feverish pain that was begging him to drift unconscious.

"I know, sweetie. It's okay. You can go to sleep. You can go." His mom kissed his head. Drista wailed, shaking her head.

Dream didn't want to sleep. He was scared. Terrified. He knew, if he went to sleep...he wouldn't wake back up. So maybe if he kept pushing, kept his eyes open, he'd have just a little bit longer. A little bit more time to say goodbye. Maybe if he stayed awake, he would get through this and survive to his treatment.

"I won't..." He tried to explain. He needed to explain. They had to know that he was trying, that he didn't want to die; he didn't want to leave them. He was just so tired and it wasn't his fault. The lulling darkness kept calling, pulling him in closer. His body felt like it was slipping through a fog, so dense it was suffocating. He tried to run away, but no matter where he turned, the fog was there. Why won't it go away?



"We- We know. Don't worry." Sapnap held his hand tight enough that Dream could feel it despite how numb he was getting. "Just rest, Dream. It's okay. We'll be okay. Don't worry about us. Just... Thank you for being my best friend, Clay. I'll...I'll love you forever, man."

"We'll be here the whole time. Even if you don't...don't come back, we're not leaving. We'll see you in the stars. Remember?" George gasped through his tears. His face was getting blurry. Why was it so blurry? Dream wanted to see them...wanted to see them when he left. "And so you know...we don't regret being here or going through this with you. We'll never regret it. We love you, Dream. Never forget that."

Don't forget me, Dream wanted to say, but darkness overpowered his voice. He squeezed Sapnap's hand and tried to portray that and so much more. I love you all. I'm sorry...

Dream eyes fluttered closed and he gave into sleep.

And in a peaceful passing, Dream never woke up.

I don't know what I'm supposed to do

Haunted by the ghost of you

Take me back to the night we met

## Notes:

dhmu, I'm fucking sobbing- why do I do this to myself???? rip  
dream and rip dreamhangouts /j

Actually though, I know this chapter is PAINFUL and could be very triggering/emotional, so if you need someone to talk to, I'm here. Feel free to DM me on Twitter or leave a comment (I'll try to reply to those, though I'm guaranteed to reply on Twitter).

Also, anytime someone tries to argue how the people who died from COVID mostly had preexisting conditions like cancer and "they were going to die anyway"...I want you to refer to this story. Because to that, I say, "How do you fucking know?" They could've been improving and just going through chemotherapy, they could be doing well, but then they get an infection like COVID or pneumonia and it kills them. All that progress, all that hope, just destroyed by another disease. Everyone dies, but everyone also deserves a chance at a long life. People not wanting to wear a mask or quarantine or be a decent fucking human may have taken that from them. Infections are inevitable and sometimes uncontrollable with cancer patients (which is why pneumonia is so dangerous), but the amount of COVID deaths could very well have been minimized.

## Chapter 11: Heads You Live On

### Notes:

the final chapter is here...and it's a happy ending!!!

also, a lot of y'all requested last chapter for another interlude with people's reactions to the ending where Dream dies. I'm totally down, and so I'm making this a series and will post a oneshot with those reactions. as an apology for making so many people cry last chapter, I will give you more content to cry over, i guess.

(See the end of the chapter for more notes.)

Chapter Text

If I had a dollar for every time they counted me out

And my back was up against the wall

I could have died but I came out fighting, fighting

Dream checked out of the hospital with a triumphant grin and declared, "I'm never coming back to this bitch."

Only to get vibe checked seconds later by George. "You literally have your T-cell treatment in less than three weeks. And, like, another year or two of checkups and chemo maintenance after that."

"George. Please shut the hell up."

Sapnap cackled while Bad frowned. "He was just telling you the truth."

"You shut up too, Bad."

"If you keep being mean, I'm going to go get Ms. Holly."

"...fine."

He knew this wasn't the last time he'd see the hospital — far from it, even. But for the first time since his relapse, he left feeling like things were going right. Like he was finally being blessed with that little bit of luck. He felt good. Not great, not normal, but good. That's all that really mattered right now.

"We should stream tonight. Like we did when Quackity and Karl were here," Dream suggested. His friends perked up.

"Oh hell yes. Can we do it on my channel?" Sapnap asked. Bad frowned.

"No, we're doing it on my channel. I'm the special guest."

They started bickering, and Dream laughed. "Gotta say, I agree with Bad. He is the guest."

Sapnap sputtered. "What? But we did the feral boys stream on George's channel."

"Yeah, but that's because he's George. Obviously."

"Obviously," Sapnap parroted. "Obviously George gets all the special privileges. Obviously."

"Does this mean, if asked, we'll stream it on my channel?" George asked, only for Bad and Sapnap to whirl around from the front seats and shout, "NO!"

Dream paused, pretending to think about it. "Well, I guess it depends on how nicely you ask."

George grinned, sinister and playful. "Dreeaaaam, can we please stream on my—"

"Shut the fuck up, George, or I will kick you out of this car," snapped Sapnap.

Bad nodded, looking just as determined. Dream cackled, meeting George's forced puppy dog eyes. He opened his mouth, about to add to the pandering, but Bad slapped a hand over his mouth.

"We're doing it on my channel! Got it?" Bad said, his voice going shrill. Dream broke down, cackling and wheezing so hard he had to lean on George. He laughed until his lungs hurt and his cheeks felt sore from smiling. When he opened his eyes (which were a little wet after nearly laughing himself to tears), he made eye contact with George. George, whose normal worry lines were finally hidden with smile lines. A carefree, genuine smile that Dream hadn't seen for weeks.

He missed this. Laughing, joking with his friends. It felt like normal — like before. Like they were being idiots on stream together, except now, they were here and by his side. He missed this so much it hurts; it made his heart clench, his chest ache. He missed when every day didn't feel like a burden.

But now...well, maybe it was naive and impulsive to say. But deep down, some part of him finally felt like things were going right. He didn't want to be hopeful — he knew so much could go wrong — but he felt good, and his treatment was soon, and the convention, meeting his friends and fans after that. He had so much to hope for.

"What are you looking at?" George asked. Dream realized he was staring. His ears burned with embarrassment, but he refused to back down and look away. He kept eye contact with George, smiling.

"Nothing. I'm just...happy."

George's eyebrows raised. "Yeah?"

"Yeah. I'm really happy you guys are here."

"Well, I'd hope so," George laughed. Dream rolled his eyes.

"Seriously though. Thank you. I know it wasn't easy, especially when I was being an idiot but...thanks for sticking through it with me. I couldn't have done it without you guys."

George grinned softly and grabbed Dream's hand, giving it a reassuring squeeze. Sapnap met his eyes through the rearview mirror. "Of course, Dream," Sapnap said. "And you can make it up to me by letting us do the stream on my channel."

And just like that, Dream was whiplashed out of the touching moment — not that he minded, as he cackled at Sapnap's expense. He's spent so much time the past few weeks wallowing in sorrow and mourning and regret. And while those emotions were still there, forever nagging in the back of his mind, it was...nice, not having to focus on them constantly. To start making light of his situation — not because he was avoiding the reality of it, but because he could do it without fear now. He wasn't as scared for his future. He didn't need to get the perfect thank you in right now because he felt confident (maybe too confident, maybe he should be worried) that he'd have all the time he needed to do that.

So he let himself laugh. The deep talks could wait.

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"Sapnap, you're doing it all wrong."

"No, I'm not, stop hovering—"

"Did you even remember to spray the pan?"

"Spray the pan? What do you mean- Spray it with what?"

"Oh muffin."

"What?!"

Dream sighed into his mic. "This is the worst cooking stream I've ever seen."

"Shut up, Dream! You're not even doing anything!"

In the end, they decided to stream the meetup on Bad's channel. It was George's idea to do a cooking stream and make a 'I made it out of the hospital alive' cake. Dream sat behind the camera this time, giving commentary and being generally unhelpful while his friends bustled around the kitchen. George and Bad battled to take charge and give directions, and Sapnap neglected every direction given him. Chat was eating it up — though whether it was because they enjoyed it, or they were just that starved for content, it was hard to tell. None of them posted anything since Dream's infamous Twitch rant (which blew up well beyond the bounds of MCYT, unfortunately), so people were desperate.

Since Dream was unable to actively participate in the cooking — though he wished he could, since, at this rate, there wouldn't be any edible cake left — he was in charge of responding to donos and chat. Even then, he couldn't really keep up. The viewer count was insane. Everyone wanted to know how Dream was, where the four of them have been, what they've been doing. It warmed his heart as much as it broke it, seeing how many people cared. Seeing how many people would be affected if anything bad happened to him. It was terrifying to think about.

"You should pour it in the pan so it looks like a 'T.' You know, for T-cell therapy," Sapnap said, looking over George's shoulder. George rolled his eyes.

"It doesn't work like that. The batter isn't thick enough to hold its shape."

People started spamming, asking for more details about the T-cell therapy. Dream felt like he should answer them vaguely just so people wouldn't worry or speculate. "So I'm going in for treatment in a few weeks. With T-cell therapy, there are some risks, but the more common ones aren't life-threatening — my doctor says they're intense flu-like symptoms. But no matter what happens, I'll be taken care of."

He left out the less savory details — like the risk of neurotoxicity, or the fact that he'll be stuck in the hospital for another month so they can monitor for symptoms or reactions to the treatment. He didn't feel like admitting those to himself, much less out loud. Shit, he was really sick of living in a hospital.

"But after that, I'll have, what? Two, three months to recover? StreamerCon is after New Years, right?"

Bad nodded, pausing to do the math in his head. "It's January 6-9, so it'll be a little less than three months after."

"Yeah. It'll be great. I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone there."

George nearly dropped the pan. "Dream."

"What?"

His friends sent him a pointed look that Dream didn't understand. He glanced at chat and saw that they were also freaking out. He could barely make out what they were saying. "Oh, I uh- shoot, I haven't really said anything official about this, have I?" He avoided talking about StreamerCon as much as possible. He wanted to give his fans a confirmation if he was going to be there so that way they knew if they should buy tickets, but he never had an answer to give them. Everything was too uncertain. He didn't know if he would be healthy enough to go, or if he'd still be fucking alive — hell, he still didn't know these things! Why was he talking like he did?



The optimism is coming in strong now, huh? Dream shook away the bitter thoughts. "Right. Well, nothing is guaranteed, and probably won't be for a while. But know I'm going to try my fu-" Bad looked ready to throw a spoon at him. Right, this was Bad's channel, he needed to be careful, "-fffflipping best to be there. I want to be there, cancer be...danged."

"Cancer be danged," Sapnap parroted, and Dream glared. The youngest shrugged it off. "See, this is what we get for streaming on Bad's channel. If we streamed on mine like I said we should, we can say fuck cancer all we want."

Bad didn't even bother scolding with the usual 'language.' He just grabbed a nearby rag and smacked the back of Sapnap's head. Sapnap sputtered and tried to get revenge, only to get smacked by George seconds later.

"What was that for?!"

"Trying to ruin the cake. Also for all the times you made fun of my cooking when you're literal trash in the kitchen."

The bickering continued. Instead of contributing or playing peacemaker, Dream closed his eyes. It was funny — they were arguing and being childish little shits — but this is what Dream missed the most. And now that he knew that, he wasn't going to lose it again.

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**where is dream?** @searching4dream

DREAM IS BACK AND OUT OF THE HOSPITAL + 4/4 MUFFINTEER STREAM  
EVERYTHING IS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD AGAIN

**Jules** @amgelil

When I tell you I clicked on Bad's stream so obvious to what I would experience,,, I literally cried when I saw Sapnap and George, plus hearing Dream's voice again. My depression is gone. My problems are fixed. Thank you.

### **Dream Updates** @UpdatesOnDream

The Dream Team made an irl appearance on Bad's stream today! Dream talked about his recent hospital discharge and his upcoming cancer treatments, and said he'll "try his best" be make StreamerCon!

### **Max is a child** @maxisachild

not you guys trending 'cancer be danged' i cant

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The reaction to his comeback after the hospital was overwhelming, to the point where Dream was forced to take a break again. He felt bad for disappearing again, but he needed some time to himself still. He just got out of the hospital and was still in recovery. His biggest concern was repaying the anxiety he caused by his last Twitch stream. He posted pictures of Patches greeting him when he got back out of the hospital, but he knew it wasn't enough.

Lucky for him, the next MCC was in two days

He wasn't scheduled to play — and for good reason, given he's been hospitalized for the past month — but he got the idea the night he got back home and couldn't help but message Scott.

### **Dream**

hey I know it's really last minute but I think it would be really cool if I could join the MCC last minute as a surprise team and then donate money to cancer or something idkkk

sorry I'm asking now, I've just been so busy lately with my treatments but I'm off chemo now and feeling lots better so I thought this would be fun :)

plus I really owe it to my fans

Sapnap, George and Bad said they can all play if you're cool with that team

should we set up a website to donate like you did with pride or should we just do it through one person's stream? also I have a charity in mind if that's cool with you

Was Dream trying to guilt-trip Scott into agreeing? Yes. He'll admit that with no shame. It's for cancer. It's a good cause. There's nothing wrong with pulling the cancer card for a good cause.

**MC Championship** @MCChampionship\_

Super secret surprise coming before the Championship starts. Make sure you tune in early so you can catch it live!

**Punz** @Punztw

Replying to @MCChampionship\_

...are contestants supposed to know about the surprise already or...

**MC Championship** @MCChampionship\_

Replying to @Punztw and @MCChampionship\_

:)

**ImoyImoy** @SmileyDreamss

Replying to @Punztw and @MCChampionship\_

THAT SMILE SUS, DREAM RAIDS MCC??

**Indigo | missed muffintees stream** @soldi3rboiz

Replying to @SmileyDreamss and @Punztw and @MCChampionship\_

Dream just got out of the hospital so probably not, I wish tho

The day of the MCC, Dream waited patiently to join. The plan was to log on right when the game started, surprising even their opponents since no one but Scott and the MCC mods knew about their team. He was buzzing with anticipation and excitement; he couldn't wait to see everyone's reactions.

Finally, Scott typed their cue in the chat.

**Smajor1995: Wait**

**Smajor1995: Before we start...**

**Smajor1995: We have one more team that needs to join.**

Dream started his stream and joined the game.

"Oh, hey guys," he said. His viewership grew quickly, his chat spamming shocked and confused emojis and messages. "I know, I know, surprise. I'm going to let a couple more of you guys join and then I'll explain."

In game, all of the other teams were rushing over to him and his teammates' characters, hitting them and jumping up and down. Everyone was losing their shit in the game chat. A huge grin broke out over Dream's face.

**Tubbo: YOOOO WTFFF**

**Technoblade: HEH**

**CaptainSparkles: DREAM DREWAM DEAM DREAM DREAN**

**Ranboo: POGGGGGGGGG**

"Alright. Sorry to keep this a secret. We didn't even know we were going to do this until a few days ago," Dream explained.

"Yeah, huge shoutout to Scott for letting us join last minute and making room for an extra team. He's a freaking goat," said Sapnap.

"For anyone asking, our team name is Cancer Haters, and we're also wearing orange for blood cancer awareness," added George.

"Adding to that — and spread the word — any money earned or donated on mine, Bad, Sapnap, or George's stream will be donated to a charity called BeTheMatch. They're an awesome organization that organizes bone marrow donor registration and matching them to patients all over the world. This means a lot to me because if my CAR T-cell therapy doesn't work, my only other option is to get a bone marrow transplant. And for thousands of people affected by blood cancers, this is their only option too. If you're 18 or older without pre-existing health conditions, and you're willing, I encourage you to look into registering as a donor. You can do it online at [bethematch.org](https://bethematch.org) or at one of their local events, and it also has great resources about what being a donor entails. Obviously, I can't be a donor, but Sapnap, George, and Bad are all registered. And if not, any amount of money donated can go such a long way.

"I know it's been a tough couple of weeks, but things have been good lately; I've been feeling great, my doctors are really optimistic. I just wanted to give back as a thank you while also having some fun with you guys. I...I really..." He muted himself in Discord so he could talk directly to his chat. "I've really missed you all. Thank you so much for your love and support these past few months. My DMs and PO box are completely overwhelmed with such sweet gifts and

messages, and I appreciate it so much. You guys are such a huge motivator for me, and I can't thank you all enough for cheering me on and believing in me. I know things haven't been easy lately, and some days still feel like the worst, but...we're going to get through it together, alright? You are the best fans anyone could ask for; you have so much faith in me. It's really helped me restore that faith in myself. Thank you."

He wiped away a stray tear, chuckling. "Ugh, now I'm crying. I'm off chemo, I shouldn't be this emotional. Stop making me so emotional, chat."

His fans teased and showered him with love, but then a flood of repeated messages caught his eye. A dono came in at that moment, confirming what chat was saying.

### **Tommy is tearing up on stream rn too. Discduo is too cute**

"Tommy is..." Dream paused, feeling a little bit concerned. He knew Tommy hated getting emotional on stream unless it was acting in lore. He sent a message to his team, letting them know he would be back, and then hopped over to join Tommy's call.

"Tommy? Are you okay?"

"Oh, you fucking-" Tommy chuckled weakly, sniffing. Dream smiled softly. "I'm fine, you bastard. Go away, the game is about to start."

"Tommyyyy," Dream said. "I've really missed you. You know that, right?"

"Shut up." The sniffing increased. Dream felt a little bad for making Tommy cry, but his heart ached with fondness. "You're turning me into a sap. It's embarrassing. My image is tarnished forever."

"I don't think your image is tarnished. You're just confirming what we all knew — that you're the number one Dream stan. It's normal to get emotional about someone you're such a big fan of."

"I fucking hate you. I really do," Tommy said. The sniffing finally came to a stop. Mission accomplished. "It really is great to see you, though. I'm glad you're doing well."

"Me too, Tommy. This means you're going to let me win, right?"

"What? No. The fuck? I'm going to destroy you like always."

"But I'm so out of practice from being in the hospital. And my skills aren't as good since I've started chemo. You have to go easy on me."

Tommy sputtered. "You are a terrible person. Now if I don't let you win, I'm going to get accused of bullying a cancer patient."

"I know. Spread the word! Go easy on Dream! Cancer Haters for the win!" He left the call, rejoining the one with his team with a laugh. "Alright, let's win this thing for real, though."

While his guilt-tripping got them far, he was painfully rusty at the game. He couldn't pull off any of his harder skills, and he never got to practice any of the courses, so he forgot how a lot of them worked. In the end, their team pulled through in fifth place. They were all satisfied with the placement. But looking at the reactions online, you would think they won it all.

## **Trending**

1 . Trending

**DREAM IN MCC**

Trending with **Cancer Haters, Muffintees**

Fans celebrate the surprise appearance of Dream and his friends in the Minecraft Championship, aka Team Cancer Haters, who are raising money on stream for cancer charities.

2 . Entertainment . Trending

**Shawn Mendes**

3 . Trending

**Discduo**

Fans of Dream and Tommyinnit share a heartwarming, tear-filled moment on stream after Dream makes a surprise appearance in the Minecraft Championship.

**dream** @dreamwastaken

Between our four streams, we were able to raise \$45,000 in subs, \$140,000 in donations, and \$25,000 in ads. Team Cancer Haters is pledging \$100,000, bringing our total to \$310,000 raised today for BeTheMatch. Thank you so much to everyone who donated. You guys are INSANE❤️❤️❤️

**dream** @dreamwastaken

Replying to @dreamwastaken

If you missed the stream but still want to donate, you can do so here  
<https://bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-financially/>



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That night, he called Tommy again, only this time, there was no stream, no fans listening in. It was just them, sharing what was on their mind.

"I swear, everyone is posting the clip of my reaction to you appearing in the game. It's embarrassing! I was just really overwhelmed. I mean, I knew you left the hospital because I watched the stream on Bad's channel, but I hadn't gotten a chance to talk to you yet since you said on Discord that you were still recovering, and I...I don't know, I've just been stressed and it was nice to see you joining in the games again, I guess."

"Yeah. I'm sorry about that, it's been a crazy few days. Besides, don't be embarrassed. It was sweet to watch."

It really was. He's watched the clip of Tommy's POV probably fifty times now. He even saved it to his phone.

(Tommy was clarifying their strategy for the first game when Scott sent the message in-game, telling everyone to wait. The teenager paused.

"What's going on?"

"Oh! I bet it's that surprise he mentioned!" Tubbo said through their call. Tommy frowned.

"What surprise? I didn't hear anything about a surprise."

"It was on Twitter," Niki explained.

"You guys know I don't go on there anymore, why didn't anyone say anything? Now I look like an--"

Scott's announcement about the new team came through, followed by names of four people joining the game. Bad, Sapnap, George, and-

"Dream," he said. The boy's face was frozen with shock. Everyone else in the call started freaking out and shouting, but Tommy was frozen, dumbstruck. He didn't move his character to rush the new players. He just sat there, processing, reeling. He blinked in a way that made it clear he was checking his vision, making sure he wasn't hallucinating.

"HOLY SHIT, HOLY SHIT-"

"IT'S DREAM, DREAM IS BACK, HE'S BACK-"

"Tommy, are you-"

Wilbur's voice got cut off seemingly by Tommy going deafen. He rubbed a hand over his face, leaving it resting on his mouth. His eyes were locked on the screen. And, if you looked closely enough, you could see them glisten with tears.

"Shit," Tommy breathed, rubbing his whole face in a failed effort to hide that he was wiping away his tears. "I don't even- Dream is...back."

His voice cracked, and a few more tears fell. The teenager sighed, glancing at his camera.

"Don't- please don't clip this, I beg of you," he said, turning off his camera. Seconds later, Dream joined the call.)

"You just made it a hundred times more embarrassing, Dream."

"What? No I- come on, Tommy, we talked about this. It's okay to cry."

"Your voice is literally making my tear ducts shrivel up. Stop it. Immediately."

Dream grinned, leaning back in his seat. "I bet you a hundred bucks that you'll cry first when we finally meet up."

"Bullshit! You're Mr. Waterworks these days, you said so yourself."

"Yeah, but I can hold it in when I want to."

"You keep telling yourself that. I'll gladly take an easy hundred. You can Venmo it to me now or you can wait until I get there, I don't care."

Dream snorted. "Yeah, right. Seriously, though, it's going to be so weird meeting everyone in what? Three months? Kinda wish it was sooner, but I'm also glad it's not. I want to regrow some hair by the time you get here."

"Yeah..."

Tommy's tone noticeably changed, making Dream frown. "You good?"

"Yeah, I'm- I'm fine, it's just..."

"Got something on your mind that's bothering you?"

Tommy sighed. "I don't know. I'm probably just being stupid but...three months feels like a long time, you know? So much can happen in three months. What if your treatment goes wrong? I don't want to- I can't imagine--"

Dream sat there silently, letting Tommy search for his words. That heavy, guilt-filled pain settled in his heart again — he was getting well acquainted with it, unfortunately. The state of his recovery affected so many people, and he hated it. How do you properly comfort someone when you're the source of their pain?

"I'm just making it worse for myself, thinking like this, aren't I? I just keep spinning these scenarios in my head and — god, why am I even talking to you

about this, this is literally your life that I've been speculating, that's so fucked up-

"It's not fucked up, Tommy. It's completely normal. Hey, listen to me." Dream took a deep breath. "You have every right to be terrified. I'm terrified. Every day in the hospital, I kept thinking- what if this is it? What if I don't make it through this? What if...What if I can't say goodbye." Images of the notebook, of the letters flooded his mind. "But I'm out of there, Tommy. I'm out of there, and I'm feeling so much better. My treatment is soon, and I don't know, but...I just feel like I'm finally going to be okay."

He could hear Tommy shuffling. "Are- Are you sure?"

"I mean, I don't actually know, but...I'm really hopeful."

"Me too," Tommy sighed. "You're sure I can't come out there early? I'm really close to convincing my parents, I know it."

Dream laughed. "I would love it, Tommy, you know that. But I'm about to go in for treatment, and I'll be stuck in the hospital for another month after that. Hanging out every day in the hospital isn't the best; just ask Bad. But we have the convention, and we have the time after, too. You'll be in the US for three weeks, right?"

"Yeah, unfortunately."

Dream rolled his eyes. "Well, we can hang out around Texas after, or we can all fly back to Florida. Tubbo, Wilbur, and the others can come too. I think it'd be fun."

"Seriously?"

"Seriously. Just let me know what you want to do, and I'll be fucking ready."

"I'll hold you to that, Dream. And don't forget my hundred. Make sure it's in pounds, too; I don't want to get cheated by your pathetic currency conversion."

"I mean, if you really want to give me extra money that badly..."

"I'm not going to fucking cry, Dream!"

---

Despite literally going through the four preceding days of chemotherapy, not to mention he was sitting in a hospital room...Dream's brain still struggled to believe that this was real. That it was really happening. So much build-up and anxiety and stress led to this day, and now it was finally here. He was finally getting CAR T-cell therapy.

And it was depressingly anticlimactic.

Dream laid in bed. The bag containing the cells hung above his head. It was a gravitational infusion, so all he had to do was sit there while they dripped in through his PICC line. His mother, Sapnap, and George sat in the hospital room with him.

"You know, when I picture life-saving treatment, I envisioned something a bit more exciting than...this," said George.

"At least this is a lot less stressful than waiting for a surgery or something," Sapnap pointed out, entertaining himself with some game on his phone.

"Smile, Clay," his mom said, holding up her phone. Dream grimaced.

"Mom, you know I don't like pictures."

His mother frowned. "Please? It's just going to your father and your siblings, I promise. Besides, maybe you'll want to look back on these pictures one day."

She said the same thing all the time when he was going through this as a kid. He's never looked at those photos. Still, he knew it would make her happy. He smiled; hopefully, it didn't look too much like a grimace.

"Handsome," George teased, and Dream flipped him off.

"No, I agree. I think I like bald Dream even more than when you had hair. You should keep it like that," said Sapnap. Dream rolled his eyes.

"Oh, fuck off."

"Clay," his mom warned. His friends snickered, making Dream even more irritated.

"Well, then take a long look, you simp, because you will never see this again." I hope.

"You already have some hair growing back," George pointed out. Dream grinned, running his hands over his fuzzy head. He noticed the prickly hairs returning about a week ago, and it made his heart soar. He knew he was progressing and getting better, but that really solidified it for him.

Within a few hours, the infusion was over. Ms. Holly came in to give him another dosage of the prophylactic medicine they started him on the day before. It was to help combat any possible side effects from the therapy, such as seizures, as well as a ton of antifungals and antibiotics. Basically everything that they would be monitoring him for the next month.

"How soon will we know if he's going to have a reaction?" his mom asked.

"Typically, we'll start seeing side effects within the next few days, but it could progress any time over the next few weeks. That's why we want to keep him here to monitor him. If it's the immuno response, he'll likely be sent to the ICU

for treatment, but that's just so he can get the best possible treatment. Those symptoms aren't life-threatening. It's the neurotoxicity we need to be worried about; if not probably cared for, it can cause lasting damage to your heart."

Ah, yes. The joys of modern cancer treatment. He felt like his life was a walking infomercial sometimes. If you or a loved one is continuously fucked over the body rejecting treatments, you may be entitled to compensation.

"So, given my luck, all of the above," Dream muttered.

"Stop being so emo, Dream," Sapnap said.

Dream sputtered. "I'm not being emo! I'm just stating a fact."

"You're literally being so edgy right now. What happened to the Dream who was like 'I feel good, guys. I feel like everything is going to turn out alright.' I like him a lot better."

"My bad, George. Would you like me to shit rainbows and talk about how friendship is the magic to solve everything too?"

Sapnap snickered. "See? Edgelord."

His mom and Ms. Holly exchanged a fond, exasperated look. "Alright, no stressing out my patient," the nurse said. Dream grinned; he knew Ms. Holly had his back. "We've just got to let his body and the treatment do their thing. Even if he is being very emo."

Dream's smile fell.

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Somehow, for the first goddamn time in his life, the universe was finally on his side.

"No, I've been super well! I haven't had any reactions to the treatment whatsoever, and I feel awesome. I'm ready to get out of this hospital, that's for sure. Spending months in the hospital is not pogchamp. Plus, I miss being home, you know."

He was currently on voice chat while George did an alt stream. It was his first time on stream since after his treatment. He's poked around on Twitter and Reddit to interact with fans, and he's texted and called with his friends often.

"Do you miss us, Dream?" George said. Dream didn't even need to look at the stream he had open to know his best friend was grinning cheekily.

"I mean, of course I do," Dream answered honestly. "I miss you, Sapnap, Patches — definitely miss Patches the most—"

"What?"

"-oh, and I miss my bed. And my bedroom. Hospital rooms just feel off, you know? Like it's fine for the first day or two, but a month? Ugh, I hate it."

"Vouch."

"You're not even staying here, George."

"Yeah, but I'm pretty much there every day, so it counts."

Later on during the stream, Dream got a text. He perked up when he was who it was from.

### **Mrs. Simmons**

Hi baby, just wanted to check on you. Paige said she was watching you earlier and told me your T-cell therapy went well. I'm so glad! I want you to know that



me and my family are praying for you that you'll end up in remission at the end of this.

**Clay**

Thank you so much! It really does mean so much. Everyone seems very optimistic about my results. I'll make sure to let you know when I get my biopsy in a week and a half. I hope everything is going okay for you and your family as well?

**Mrs. Simmons**

We're doing well, thanks to you.

I really cannot express how grateful we are to you. Not only for taking care of our boy, but for taking care of our family after. I don't know if we would have been able to manage all those bills, and that terrifies me. I thank God every day for bringing you into our lives. You really have been the blessing we needed.

Dream's cheeks burned. He sucked at taking compliments, much less something as heartfelt as this.

**Clay**

I was just doing what was right. Your family has impacted me so much. It was the least I could do

**Mrs. Simmons**

Don't you dare discredit yourself. It was so much more and you know that.

I wish everyone who's going through the same thing as our family could have someone like you too.

Dream's brain started to spiral with untamed ideas and creative possibilities. He needed to get rid of his distractions so he could make sense of them.

"Hey, George, I've got to go."

"Huh? Is everything alright?"

Dream scrambled for an excuse. "Yeah, it's fine. I, uh...the nurse is just going to come in soon."

"Right..." He knew George saw through the fib. Thankfully, his best friend didn't press. "Well, I'll see you later. Bye!"

"Bye."

Dream turned back to his phone, at the message that wouldn't leave his mind alone. I wish everyone who's going through the same thing as our family could have someone like you too. Someone like him; someone to bring joy to the patient and relief to the family. There were tons of charities to help with financial support for cancer patients. But he also knew that some organizations, like Make-A-Wish, focused on terminal illnesses. Childhood leukemia had a very high recovery rate — but that didn't make it any less devastating or stressful.

The same thing as our family...

Dream had no idea what he was doing. He had no idea where to go with these ideas. Some kind of fund, or a nonprofit, or anything to help patients with childhood leukemia and their families — that's what he wanted to create. That's how he could carry on Dameon's legacy. He just needed to figure out where to start.

And he knew just the man to contact for an idea as crazy as this.

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Dream couldn't tell which sucked more — getting another bone marrow biopsy, or waiting for the results.

His mom and little sister held his hands. His friends were currently all on-call (except for Sapnap and George, who were here in person), waiting for him to join before he got the news. They wanted to hear it live, no matter what the results may be. Dream was reluctant at first; if the biopsy showed that there was still leukemia, he knew he was going to fucking lose it. He really didn't want to have so many people listening in on that.

But, if it went well, and he was in remission...he wanted to share in that success with them. They've all been a part of this journey; they've supported him to the point of losing their hair alongside him. They deserved to celebrate with him too.

Dr. Brett walked in, and Dream's heart jumped into his throat. He scrambled for his phone, making sure everyone could hear him while being muted — at least until his doctor left.

"Hello, Clay. We have your biopsy results." Her face was as impassive as ever. Dream knew that if she didn't give him the news in the next five seconds, he was going to start screaming.

"And?"

"They're completely clear. The treatment worked. You are officially in remission."

Remember how he said that if the results were bad that he was going to 'fucking lose it.' Well, he lied. He fucking lost it hearing the good news too.

It was like a dam inside him burst. All that pent-up stress, anxiety, worrying that he was going to drop dead at any moment rushed out of him in an unstoppable wave of emotion. He's spent months wondering how much time he

had left — hell, he even had a secret document where he planned out his own funeral, flowers, and everything. He wrote goodbye letters; he prepared himself for the worst because, especially after Dameon, that felt like the only option life gave him.

But now, now. Now, he was cancer-free once more. He did the seemingly impossible. He beat the terrifying odds. Words couldn't express the relief of knowing that your seemingly inevitable early death might just be postponed a little longer.

A vision filled his mind; a bright smiling face, arms reached out to catch the coin Dream just tossed.

It was headed, Dameon, he cried in his head — cried to a friend gone too soon. It landed on heads. I'm going to be okay.

Fat, hot tears coated his face, and they felt so wet and uncomfortable. His lungs burned because he couldn't get enough oxygen in with his chest-heaving sobs. His hands trembled and his vision blurred and he couldn't stop crying. But even then, there was the widest smile on his face. His heart was light with relief instead of heavy with guilt. A strong pair of arms wrapped around him, and then another, and another, and another, until he was completely enveloped by his friends and family. They held him tight, crying and whispering words of comfort and congratulations. Someone unmuted his friends, and the call had just descended into screaming.

"FUCKING POG!"

"Wait what does this mean? Is the cancer gone? Like gone gone?"

"I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU DREAM!"

"Dream, are you crying? Don't cry! You're going to make me cry!"

Dream laughed, his nose snotty and throat thick. Ms. Holly passed him a tissue, a soft smile on her face. When he pulled himself together a bit, he picked up his phone.

"Thank you so much. I'm just so, so relieved. This is..."

"Pogchamp?" Tubbo supplied. Dream grinned.

"Yeah, it's totally pogchamp. I can get my life back to normal now. Thank fucking god."

"Excluding maintenance chemotherapy, but yes, life can start to look and feel a bit more normal. The results look very optimistic. It should be a smooth recovery from here," said Dr. Brett.

Sapnap punched the air triumphantly while George hugged Dream again, nearly squeezing the life out of him. Dream returned the hug with just as much ferocity. Tears sprung into his eyes again.

"Thank you. We did it. Together," he whispered. Sapnap noticed the hug and quickly joined in.

"Nah, man, this was all you. You did this."

"And science," Techno said, only to get shushed by everyone else on the call.

Dream rolled his eyes. "Yeah, but I couldn't have done it without your support. It means so much and I don't think I've told you guys that enough."

"Don't worry. We know, Dream. You're a great friend, and we can never pay you back enough," George assured him.

"You guys are hugging him, right? Because I'm punching the wall since I can't and someone needs to give him a damn hug," Puffy said.

"Don't worry. They've been like koalas to a tree the whole time," Drista said, making their friends coo.

"I hope you know, when we all meet up, it's just going to be us smothering you with hugs all day," said Sam.

"Vouch!" Jack shouted. Dream laughed.

"You better. If I don't get to hug every single one of you, I think I will cry," he admitted without shame. He used to get embarrassed about crying, but after the last few months, it was almost second nature. "If you don't hug me, I will kick you off the Dream SMP, and that's a threat and a promise."

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**dream** @dreamwastaken

happy thanksgiving! I'm excited to kick off the holiday by thanking the amazing doctors, nurses, and scientists who have helped work on me and my treatment. if it weren't for them, I couldn't say...I'M OFFICIALLY IN REMISSION  
#GETFUCKEDCANCER

**George** @GeorgeNootFound

Replying to @dreamwastaken

I feel like I can breathe again. I'm so proud of you.

**Sapnap** @sapnap

Replying to @dreamwastaken

extra thank yous to Ms. Holly for being the best fucking nurse ever

**dream** @dreamwastaken

Replying to @sapnap

Vouch.

**George** @GeorgeNootFound

Replying to @dreamwastaken and @sapnap

Vouch.

**karl!** @honkkarl

Replying to @dreamwastaken @sapnap and @GeorgeNootFound

Vouch.

**quackity4k** @quackity4k

Replying to @dreamwastaken @sapnap and two others

Vouch.

**Happy Dream** @happydreamdaily

I'm starting a Nurse Holly fan club, who's with me?

**Josie** @josiesmiles

OMG DREAM IS IN REMISSION HES OKAY IM SHAKING AND CRYING I CANT  
FXYJHDEYH EVERYONE CHECK IN ON THEIR SMILETWT MOOTS TODAY,  
ALRIGHT?

**Dezmond** @deznuts

ay Dream is in remission, does this mean Dream @ steamercon confirmed??

---

Dream's leg wouldn't stop shaking. He sat in the passenger seat of the car, Sapnap driving like always. George sat in the backseat, looking way calmer — which made sense, considering he's met the European streamers multiple times now. He had nothing to be anxious about. He got to experience that excitement solely, get to focus on the joy of seeing your friends again without worrying you'll be a disappointment.

Dream ran a hand over his hair. It was still short, only buzz cut length. Maybe he should've gone with the beanie? He wasn't bald anymore, sure, but he wasn't that far off either.

"Dream." George's voice snapped him out of his fretting. He jolted, meeting George's intense gaze. "It's fine. You look good. No one will care about that kind of thing anyway."

"Yeah, I know, it's just...different. I never imagined it would be like this a year ago, that's for sure."

Sapnap snorted. "I'd hope not."

"Tommy just texted me. They're at the hotel. Our rooms are right next to each other, apparently," said George.

Dream took a deep breath, trying to ground himself. SteamerCon started tomorrow. God, just thinking about it made him feel sick. Jimmy helped get a lot of them set up in a nice, secured hotel. Logically, a pre-convention party was in order. Which meant, for the first time ever, Dream would be in the same room as almost all of the friends he met through streaming. It was going to be a lot.



Lots of people, lots of reunions, lots of hugs, lots of tears, and a whole lot that can go wrong.

He knew George was right. His friends won't care that his hair is short — hell, they all had this hairstyle a few months ago to support him. But it wasn't the hair. It was the way his skin clung to his bones after chemo ate away at his appetite, and therefore his weight. He's only gained about seven pounds back from the twenty-five he lost after months on chemotherapy. Or the eye bags that have persisted, or, worst of all, his PICC line. He opted to keep it in for the remainder of his maintenance treatment, since it made infusions so much easier. It wasn't a hassle to him anymore, so he didn't mind it. Plus, there was always a chance that the leukemia could come back. He didn't want to think about that, but his pessimism made him leave the PICC in until they could be more sure.

Seeing him, even in recovery, made the illness and everything he suffered more real. It was going to hurt them, seeing him like this. He just wished he could do more to stop that pain.

Half an hour later, they pulled up to the hotel. Dream secured his mask and hood, just to be safe. They got their room keys and passed their bags off to the concierge attendants. Dream's heartbeat spiked as the elevator took them up to their floor. There was no doubt Tommy and the others would be waiting for them. Should they go to Tommy's room to greet them first? Wait for them to come to their room? What would seem the most normal?

George's hand grasped his arm, squeezing it comfortingly. The touch brought Dream out of his head. His best friend nodded, smiling softly, and Dream nodded back.

The elevator door opened. Around the hallway corner, he could hear his friends' voices chattering excitedly. His heart pounded, and he shoved his clenched fists into his hoodie pocket.

"-hotel is fucking nice, how did MrBeast get us set up in here? Like holy shit."

"I didn't know Houston was so big. I thought Texas was just cowboys and longhorns?"

"Oh, it is. Don't worry," Sapnap said as they rounded the corner. Tommy, Jack, Tubbo, and Ranboo sat in the small lobby area on their floor. The four teens perked up.

"Sapnap! Gogy!" Jack cheered.

"How's America been, fucking traitor?" Tommy said to George.

"Is that Dream?" said Tubbo, pointing to the man hanging in the back. Dream suppressed a grimace and waved.

"Hey, guys."

There was a long awkward pause.

"Hey guys?" Tommy sputtered. "Hey guys? All this time and he says- get your ass over here, you fucking idiot."

Dream choked on a laugh while the offended British teen marched over to him. Dream barely had time to take in Tommy's face — real, expressive, here — before he was yanked into the most aggressive hug. His heart stuttered with relief, and Dream squeezed Tommy back just as tight. He smiled, closing his eyes and enjoying the moment. All those long calls, hearing Tommy struggle from afar without being able to give real comfort. They've both needed this hug more than either would admit.

Tears threatened to bubble up, but then Dream felt Tommy's body shudder. "Are you crying, Tommy?"

"No, I'm not," Tommy said, though the way his voice cracked suggested otherwise.

"It's okay, Tommy," Dream soothed him, patting Tommy's hair. "You can pay me a hundred bucks later."

"Fuck. You." Tommy shoved back, wiping at his face. His eyes narrowed as he looked closely at Dream's face. "Your eyes are all watery. You were crying too!"

"Probably," Dream shrugged. Tommy sputtered and turned back to the others.

"Who started crying first? It was Dream, right?"

"Nah, it was definitely you," Tubbo said, pushing past the taller teen to give Dream a hug. Ranboo came up after, crushing Dream with a towering hug.

"Holy shit, you're tall," Sapnap muttered, craning his head just to look at Ranboo.

"I think our hair is the same length now," Jack said, rubbing Dream's hair and then rubbing his own. "Actually, you might have me beat."

"Looks like you can have your brand back." Dream grinned, relieved at how natural this all felt. They didn't seem uncomfortable. If they thought he looked weird or sickly, they didn't let it show. It felt normal and right. And now Dream couldn't wait to meet the others.

---

"Dream! Dream, where's my hug?"

"Huh. You really are tall."

"Oh no, did I bump your PICC thing? I'm so sorry!"

"So that's what you look like when you wheeze."

"I want to hug Dream next!"

"You haven't even hugged me yet, Ponk."

"Shush, Sam, you're not the important one here."

Ponk shoved his way, squeezing Dream's chest. The moment he pulled back, Sam was there, and then Puffy came back for a second hug. They were pulling through on their promise. Dream couldn't complain. The hugs were nice. If he had to rank them, he'd probably put Wilbur's hug toward the top. It was enveloping and warm, and Wilbur's chest rumbled when he laughed. Eret's was similarly nice, as was Niki's. None of this was a surprise. Perhaps one of the bigger surprises was how good Purpled was at hugging. The kid looked gangly and bony, but his hug got the Dream stamp of approval. He was kind of an expert on hug quality now.

Dream smiled, taking in the group of people — his friends, the people he's built an amazing platform with, the people who have cheered him on every step of the way, before and after his relapse.

For a moment, his mind flashed back to that notebook. Letters written in shaky handwriting, all individually addressed to each person in this room. The message they contained, however, did not reflect the joyful cheer of this reunion. Those letters were unread, and Dream couldn't be more grateful. It would stay that way. More than just hope, Dream knew it would stay that way. It had to. For everyone — his family, his friends, his fans, he could only get better from here.

Dream didn't want his life to become a tragedy. For him, for Dameon, and for every other cancer patient, it needed to be a triumph.

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The noise was deafening.

The members of the DSMP stood in a backroom. They were scheduled to have a panel located in the conference theater due to the sheer number of fans seeking to attend. Not only that, but their panel would be broadcasted all over the convention and via stream for fans who couldn't attend in-person. Hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions of eyes would be on them.

"I swear, if I trip walking onto the stage — that's it. You'll never hear from me again," Karl declared.

According to MrBeast's event planners, they were modeling the panel off the Marvel film panel at Comic-Con. They'd walk out in groups, sit and answer questions from fans, even do a few games and stupid competitions to make it entertaining. There was a height check lineup scheduled halfway through, which many, like Sapnap and George, were dreading.

Dream was dreading just walking out there.

The infamous and overly anticipated Dream face reveal. How can anyone live up to that level of hype? Dream could be a professional model, and people would probably still complain because he didn't fit the 'perfect' image they made up in their heads. Dream always claimed he wasn't nervous for his face reveal, but even before he relapsed, that was kind of a lie. He knew his true fans would be super supportive, but that twisty anxiety persisted when he thought of everyone else.

Now, only a few months into leukemia remission, that anxiety about his appearance was tenfold.

Wilbur must've read the apprehension on his face. "Anyone who says shit is just a fuckfaced asshole with no humanity and self-esteem tinier than Piers Morgan's dick," he pointed out. "Not only are they mocking someone for their looks, but they're saying that about a cancer survivor. You can't justify or redeem that. They're wrong and they're an asshole, and you're a handsome millionaire who just kicked leukemia's ass for the second time. They have nothing on you."

Dream blinked. Whatever he expected Dream to say, it wasn't that. "Geez, Wilbur, at least take me on a date first before you make me swoon like that."

"Well, I do owe you Pizza Hut."

"Are you two flirting?" Tommy squawked, his vlog camera pointed right at them. Dream tried not to tense up. It was a weird and new feeling, being filmed all the time.

"And to think, after all this time, he's leaving George for another British dude with brown hair," Ranboo said.

Dream tried not to blush. "What?"

"It's the glasses, isn't it?" George asked.

"What, no-"

"It could be the height. What are your thoughts on being the little spoon, Dream?" Puffy said. Dream couldn't stop the blush this time.

"Okay, first of all, no-"

"Attention, everyone focus in. The panel is starting soon," one of the employees interrupted, saving Dream from complete humiliation. But soon after, that anxiety settled back in, and he started to miss the teasing. At least it was distracting.

They got lined up according to the groups of ten that they would enter in. Dream was in the last group, George and Sapnap by his side.

"Is it too late to back out now?" he mumbled. Sapnap frowned.

"Of course not, dude. If you don't want to do this, then you don't have to. We'll be the first to leave with you, even," he said, and George nodded. "But I believe in you. You're ready for this. This has always been the goal, remember. It's not quite how we envisioned — cancer aside, I don't think any of us imagine this." He gestured to the noisy crowd beyond the walls. "But it's going to be amazing, no matter what happens.

"Even if one of us trips on stage?" Dream asked, smiling weakly.

"Especially if that happens. Do you know how fucking funny that would be?"

George clasped Dream's shoulder. "Do you feel better?"

The anxiety was there, and Dream felt somewhere between barfing and dying — but he did feel a bit more confident. He looked at the room filled with his friends; he wasn't alone. He could do this.

"Yeah. Let's do this."

They moved from the room to a hallway, and then into the backstage area. He could barely hear the announcer listing off people's names as they walked on stage. The screams were so loud. Screams of excitement, cheering them on, eager to see them. To see him.

An employee with a headset beckoned them forward. The Dream Team was set to go out last. First Sapnap, then George, and then finally Dream. He brushed a hand over his short hair. He was so tempted to wear a beanie, but he didn't want to hide. He wanted to own his experience with pride.

Suddenly, his friends were gone, and the stage manager was motioning him forward. He walked numbly into the blinding lights, and a roar of screams like never before smack into him. It resonated in his chest, leaving an electric tingling in his body. He stared out into the blurred crowd, trying to take it all in. People were jumping and panicking; quite a few started crying. He glanced back only to see his face projected on a massive TV screen — he jumped, not expecting it, and many of the screams were replaced by laughter. He fumbled a bit, trying to regain his bearings, and he turned back to the crowd to wave. The crowd responded, and Dream grinned so wide his cheeks hurt.

George came over, grabbing Dream's hand and guiding him to his seat like a lost puppy. The crowd loved it. For good measure, Dream pulled George into a hug from behind and rested his chin on his friend's head. The DNF stans were going to love that one.

The panel started like normal. The first round of questions came up, and Dream was delighted how well distributed they were so that everyone got some attention, and not just the major streamers on the DSMP. When a question was directed solely at Dream, he was unsurprised that it was about his leukemia.

"How has your recovery been since your CAR T-cell therapy? Do you have any big plans to celebrate besides the convention? Congrats on your remission, of course."

Dream took the microphone. "Thank you. I've been doing great. My recovery has been awesome. I feel so much healthier, especially being off chemotherapy. I have a lot more energy, I don't have to be so cautious and paranoid all the



time. It's only been a little bit, but it feels like things are getting back to normal already. As for plans, well, obviously being here with everyone and hanging out has been the best. But beyond that, I actually do have some...pretty big plans. I was actually planning on talking about them today. Do you think now is a good time?"

He was talking to the stage managers, but the crowd responded just as eagerly. His friends glanced around, looking confused, and Dream smirked as he stood up. He hid this from all of them, even Sapnap and George. It was his big surprise.

The stage manager nodded from off stage, and Dream stood up.

"So, as I'm sure a lot of you know, when I was going through chemotherapy I actually made a connection with another patient there. He was only eleven, which was the same age as me the first time I got diagnosed. His prognosis was even lower. But what really caught my attention was that, just like you guys, he was a fan." The crowd fell the quietest it's been since they started. Dream took a deep breath and blinked through the surfacing memories. "He was always watching streams and playing Minecraft. He recognized me early on but didn't say anything for a while to respect my boundaries. He was the sweetest kid alive, and I got lucky enough to become his friend."

He choked a little at the end, tears threatening to spill. He took a deep breath. He needed to maintain his composure. "Day didn't make it, in the end. But every day leading to his last, he lived to his absolute fullest. Life gave him nothing, yet he never complained. But even then, I wanted to make it up to him. He deserved better. Every kid going through that deserves better."

He felt a hand rub his back, and Bad was at his side, comforting him. Dream smiled and cleared his throat. "I promised myself that I would preserve Day's

legacy and message. And, with some help from Mama Day and MrBeast, I found the perfect way to do it. I call it the Daydream Project.”

A logo appeared on the screen behind Dream. He could hear the crowd murmur. “It’s a charity dedicated to assisting kids with blood cancer, no matter the type, in the same way I had the opportunity to help Day. It provides funding for treatment and hospital funding, as well as numerous other financial resources and consultants for families. It will also coordinate with patients and families to bring the patient’s greatest dream to life. Turning that daydream into reality, as the slogan goes. Often kids with blood cancer, especially ALL, are left out of programs like Make-A-Wish due to its low mortality rates. In my experience, any child going through a battle like that deserves a huge reward from the universe to make up for it. That’s just a glimpse at what the Daydream Project hopes to accomplish.

“The project is still in the very early stages, and it will be a while before it can start operating. But, it means a whole lot to me and Day’s family, and I really wanted to share this bit of good news. If you’re like me, Day will never leave your heart, and now, you can still support him in the way he did best — by giving back. Thanks for coming to my Ted Talk.”

Dream gave a little bow at the end. Seconds later, he was surrounded by an assault of hugs from his friends. He wheezed and pulled himself free, the anxiety from before completely gone. It worked. Everything was going as he hoped — no, even better. The support, the love; it was so overwhelming, he couldn’t put it to words.

“Thank you. Thank you guys so much.”

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Dream sat on a cliff overlooking the sea.

It was nighttime. An endless starry night illuminated by a full moon filled his vision. He stared, taking in the view. Orion shown on full display in the late November sky. A small but warm fire sat behind him, brightening his field of vision.

One year. One year to the day. One year ago, he was told he was in remission. Doctors appointments after doctors appointments, he stayed in the clear. His treatment eased up. In a few months, they would be taking him off it completely.

A lot has changed in that year. He regained his physical health and appearance, his hair returned to its original length. The PICC line was long gone. His channel grew in popularity, spiking even more after his face reveal. The DSMP evolved more than they imagined. With the launch of the Daydream Project, Dream found himself stuck in an odd balance of a streamer and a cancer advocate. But even then, some things never changed. Sappap and George remained firmly at his side. His fans stayed as loyal as ever. And Patches, of course, remained the most spoiled cat in the world.

A notebook sat in Dream's hands. Ms. Holly gave it to him after his last appointment. It's been so long, Dream almost forgot it existed. She handed it over with a smile on her face. "I know your treatment is not officially over, but...I don't think I need to hang onto this anymore." She pulled Dream in for a hug. "I'm so proud of you, Clay."

"I...thank you, Ms. Holly. For everything. You were always there for me, doing more than anyone could ask. Thank you so much," he whispered. He turned to leave, clenching the notebook firmly in his hands.

"Clay?" Ms. Holly called out. He paused at the doorway. "One more thing."

She tossed something small and shiny at him. Dream barely caught it before it clattered on the floor. When he unclenched his fist, a small, familiar coin stared back at him.

"You...kept it?"

Ms. Holly smiled. "It was heads. I'm sorry I hid it from you for so long, but Dameon didn't want me to jinx it."

Dream couldn't take his eyes off the coin. It was heads side up again.

"Dameon knew?"

"He kept asking, so I finally told him. He was so excited for you — made me promise not to say anything. Said it would lose the magic if I did."

That magic coin now sat on his desktop back at home, the heads side face up. And that notebook filled with goodbyes and heartbreak remained in his hands. He refused to let it out of his sight; he didn't want to risk George or Sapnap catching a glimpse. They were curious about it, of course. They probably even suspected, if their sad expressions meant anything. But he gave them no answers.

He looked from the notebook to the ocean below. The strong tides and crashing waves. A breeze rustled the pages, giving him a glimpse of the scribbled words. Words only meant to be read if he couldn't say them himself.

But he has. He's said them a dozen times over, and he'll have years to say them again. There was no point in keeping the notebook around.

So he opened his hand and dropped it into the fire built solely to dissolve the notebook to ash. Watched the pages catch fire one at a time, watched them shrivel up and darken, until the whole thing was engulfed in flames. The

sorrowful inked words disappeared just like the leukemia from his body. And hopefully, neither would return. He sat there for a long time, mesmerized by the dancing orange sparks and the crumbling notebook. Once he was sure it was gone, he grabbed the nearby bucket of water and poured it over the fire. The smoke blew out and upwards. Dream watched it point to the stars.

"You coming, Dream?" Sappnap said, bringing him back. He and George waited at the bottom of the hill at Dream's request.

Dream spared one last glance at the extinguished fire and the stunning view over the cliff. And then he turned back to his friends, taking in the faces he trusted and loved the most. Two people who experienced hell with him and supported him every day in his year of remission. Two people he knew would always be by his side, no matter what happened. Not even leukemia could take them away.

"Yeah. I'm coming."

It's been a long journey, and while so much has passed, it wasn't over yet. But he wasn't alone. He never was, and he never would be.

And because of that, no matter what happened, he had nothing to fear.

## Notes:

IMPORTANT PLEASE READ: The charity mentioned during the MCC scene, Be the Match, is a real charity! A commenter told me about this amazing charity and asked me to give it a shoutout in the notes. I thought it was such a good cause, it deserved plot attention. I encourage you all to look into Be the Match and consider donating. If you're 18+ and physically/mentally able and comfortable with it, you can look

into becoming a donor. I've registered as a donor and I'm just waiting on my swab kit! \*\*\*\*\*Do your research first before becoming a donor, it is a big commitment\*\*\*\*\* You can find out more on <https://bethematch.org/>

Wow. I did not expect this fic to garner the attention and emotion it did. Thank you so much to everyone who read this story. It's meant so much to me. I've read all of your comments and it makes my heart feel so warm reading your kind messages. This story started as a way for me to cope and address a lot of personal emotions and experiences, and I poured a lot of my heart into it. Some people have reached out expressing how it affected them similarly, and I'm happy I could help you with my writing. I wish you all the absolute best.

Like I said in the beginning note, I will be adding a oneshot fic that is a continuation of the sad ending in chapter 10. It will delve into how the world will react. It'll probably take some time to write, especially because I've started a new project for this fandom, but I will do my best to get it out as soon as I can!

Keep up to date on my projects or to just say hi, here's my Twitter!

ALSO THERE'S FANART, PLEASE GO GIVE THIS BEAUTIFUL ART AND THE ARTISTS LOVE:

Dameon and Dream

Sad ending

## Series this work belongs to:

- Part 1 of the (Re)Mission series

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